THE MEMOIRS OF THE Countess of *Dunois*;

Author of the Lady's Travels into *Spain*.

Written by her Self before her Retirement.

By way of ANSWER to

Monsieur *St. EVREMONT*.

Containing withal

A Modest Vindication of the Female Sex, more frequently injur'd by Imprudence and Misconstruction, then Defect of Vertue.

Made English *from the Original.*

LONDON:
Printed for *Tho. Cockerill* in *Amen-Corner*. 1699.

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To the Honourable

Popham Conoway, Esq.

SIR,

THE Countess of *Dulcy*, so famous for Her Travels into *Spain*, and a no less Celebrated Court Star of *France*, has now taken a Passport from the General Peace, to make her Tour in *England*. This is She, whose Noble *Gallick* Veins are not only enricht with all the outward Charms of an Extraordinary Beauty, but She is Mistriss al-

so of such Admirable Wit and Gallantry, that the Rich Gem within is no way undeserving the Fair and Noble Casket that contains it.

'Tis very probable therefore, that all these Advantages have set Her to that height of Universal Admiration, that Detraction and Envy, (the common Repiners at Perfection and Excellence) have not been a little industrious to shade and tarnish so dazling a Brightness: But all their weak Assaults against Her Unshaken Honour, have rather augmented Her Worth and Reputation, and fixt Her Name Immortal as Her Innocence, whilst both *France* and *Spain* sate Judges in Her Cause; and weighing it in the Noblest Ballance, have Enshrin'd Her Righted Vertue with a Sacred Comment in some of the most impartial and Indelible Records of *Europe*.

This Fair Stranger, Sir, who at present has given me the Honour

of

of officiating for Her Interpreter, moſt humbly by me, begs Your Protecting Goodneſs to hand Her into the Court of *England.*

And now, Sir, if I may be permitted to give This every way Deſerving Lady ſome little knowledge of the Merits of Her *Engliſh* Patron, I muſt do ye Both this Juſtice, to aſſure Her, that She is in the hands of Honour, and lodg'd in very Hoſpitable Walls.

She'll find You, Sir, a Perſon ſo Excellently Accompliſh'd, ſo Truly Furniſh'd with all thoſe Merits and Endowments, that Wit and Learning, and every Other the Nobleſt Faculty of a Generous Mind, and a great Soul, can poſſibly infuſe; and ſuch the Handmaid of the Almighty, Great Nature, did allow You, making Them Your Hereditary Glories, Virtues no leſs then ev'n born with You, whilſt You derive Your immediate Veins from

an Apollinary Original, a Father that shin'd so many Successive Glorious Years, the Chosen Darling Oracle of our AUGUST, and FAMOUS *ALBION* SENATE.

With all these Powerful Charms, and such Infinite Deserts, and, Sir, with all the Smiles of Heaven to Crown 'em, You have been singl'd out for that Peculiar Favourite of Providence, that ev'n Contending Families have Rivall'd for You, whilst to invite You to new loads of Honour, You have Assum'd the Name of *CONOWAY*, to make Your Adopted Lawrels as Rich as Your Native Ones.

But now, as much as my own Ambition has Aspir'd to make You this Publick Address, I have yet a more Attracting Influence that draws me to Your Feet; which is to let the World know, how much I stand indebted already to Your Generosi-

ty

ty for thoſe repeated Showers of ever-ſmiling Goodneſs You have been pleas'd to pour upon me; and that all the Returns that my Poor Pen in this ſmall Preſent can make You, is but a Thankſgiving-Offring, the Pure Obligation of Duty and Gratitude from,

SIR,

Your moſt Obliged, moſt Devoted,

and ever Humble Servant,

J. H.

TO

TO THE
READER.

IN despight of all the Reports which have bin spread abroad to the prejudice of my Reputation, I had taken a Resolution never to write in my own Justification. But Certain Memoirs that have appear'd in public within this little while, made me determine to compile this short Account of my own Life. For tho all the World be sufficiently convinc'd, that those Memoirs are no more then a Collection taken out of Several Romances, and that Saint Euremont's *Name be only borrow'd to give 'em Credit, they may be able to insinuate an Opinion very much to the Disadvantage of Women. However, I know by my own Experience, that Imprudence and Chance have many times a greater share*

in

in their Miſcarriages, then want of Vertue. The Memoirs of my Life will make it Evident, that 'tis not always ſafe to judge by outward Appearances; and that a little Beauty, more of Youth, and Deficiency of Judgment, are frequently more injurious to their Reputation then the Crime it Self.

THE

THE MEMOIRS OF Madam, the Countess of —

Before her Retirement.

Book the First.

'TIS not to justify my self, that I undertake to write the Memoirs of my Life. For 'tis a long time since that God has given me the grace to look upon the Injurious Reports that have bin spread abroad concerning me in the World, as a punishment of my vanity. And for that reason I submit my self to the conduct of his Providence: Happy in this, that I am sensible of my own Innocence as to every thing that Calumny has laid to my Charge; but on the other side, unfortunate to have lost the merit of my Innocence by the Scandals to which I have bin too guilty of giving the occasion.

I thought it might be permitted me to write my own Hiſtory, were it but to juſtify by my Example ſuch Perſons of my Sex as have of late been made the Objects of common Reproach. 'Tis well known to what degree Reproaches are improv'd in that reſpect; ſeeing that now-a-days we meet with ſo many People ſo adventurous to maintain, That there is hardly an honeſt Woman in the Town. 'Tis true, the malignity of Men is not the only reaſon of the little juſtice which they do us, ſeeing there are Women, who may be thought to have taken delight in confirming the ill opinion which men have of us: And indeed, there are none who have done more injuſtice to their Sex, then they who have written the Memoirs of their Amours, and diſpers'd into the World Letters for which their Paſſion and Debauchery found Materials. From their Examples men have condemn'd all thoſe whom they ſuſpected of having any Amorous Intreagues; and when a Woman has once got the Reputation of a Coquette, ſhe is preſently adjudg'd to be one of thoſe that make it their glory to be ſo.

I therefore thought it might be one means to deſtroy this growing Opinion, by a faithful recital of the Adventures of my Life, to ſhew, that a Woman may be defam'd, yet not be guilty; and that there is many times more of Misfortune then Irregularity in the Conduct of ſeveral Women, upon whom the Public is pleas'd to throw their Scandals. There is alſo another benefit to be reap'd from theſe Memoirs: For from thence you will learn to avoid all ſuch Misfortunes as are lookt upon as Crimes; and to ſhun thoſe things which may give occaſion to ſully the Reputation of Women, by obſerving where I my ſelf became an ill Manager of my own.

I am

I am well descended as well by the Father's as by the Mother's side; but it was the first of my Misfortunes that I was born too soon; for my Mother was hardly arriv'd to Sixteen years of Age when she lay in of me. And because that in Ten years after my Mother had no more Children, I was looked upon as Heiress of my Father's Estate. All this while my Mother was too young to let a Daughter grow up with her at home, that would have kept the Hand of her Dyal from standing long at Sixteen. So she sent me to a Grandmother, who had that fond love for me, which Women advanc'd in years have many times for Children by whom they expect the continuation of their Name and Family. She made it her business to infuse into me, upon the score of my Birth and Beauty, all the Vanity and Pride she had been guilty of her self; and the first thing that I learnt, was, that I was Fair, and destin'd to the most noble and elevated Pretensions. With these Fancies I was flatter'd all along; and I had already attain'd Eleven years of Age, when my Mother was brought to bed of a Boy. But no sooner was this Son and Heir come into the World, but my Grandmother began to lavish out all her Affection for me, upon him; my Beauty was no longer flatter'd: No more talk of my being a Princess or a Dutchess at least: No — I must stifle all those gaudy Expectations: My Brother had bereav'd me of all those great Advantages. On the other side, they began to instil into me Inclinations to a Religious Life; and at length, they told me flat and plain, it was the manner of living, and all the Preferment my Parents had design'd me.

I was already big enough, and had so much Reason about me, as to be deeply sensible how disastrous such a Resolution would be to me: And the very thoughts of it infus'd into me as great an aversion

for my nearest Relations, as before I had respect and complacency for 'em. My Father was the only Person for whom I still preserv'd some little affection; for he still seem'd to have something of kindness for me. So that whenever they talk'd of putting me into a Nunnery, I always had recourse to him, and to him made known my Reluctancy and Despair. Which I so well expresst in words accompani'd with tears, that my Father himself could not refrain from weeping. But he, good man, wore not the Breeches: And therefore he advis'd me, for his sake, to suffer for a while the Inconveniencies of a Convent, with a promise that I should not long be under that Confinement, but that he would dispose of me so soon as I was ripe for Marriage.

Upon this I obey'd, and I was put into a Nunnery, where the Abbess was my Father's Cousin German; and in her I met again with as much fondness as formerly my Grandmother had for me. Which together with the hopes that my Father had giv'n me, was no small consolation to me.

Now in regard I had all the liberty I could desire in the Nunnery, I had so accustom'd my self to do what I pleas'd, that no body durst contradict me. And being thus flatter'd and caress'd, it was no wonder if I gave a second harbour to all that vanity which my Grandmother had infus'd into me. The Praises also which the Nuns continually gave me, daily swell'd this Vanity: And by that means I came to understand, that Convents, where young People are allow'd the liberty I had, are no better Schools for Children, then the Houses of Fondling Parents that idolize their own Issue. The more I was persuaded that all Nuns were Saints, the more I sooth'd my self that I deserv'd their Praises; and the more vainly I flatter'd my self, that there was

nothing

nothing in me to be amended, ſeeing thoſe very Perſons who were entruſted with the care of my Conduct, applauded every thing I did, and every thing which I deſir'd to do.

In this manner I was bred up, with little inſtruction in the Duties of my Religion. Not that they omitted to teach me the grounds of it; but in regard I had an excellent Memory, I made it my application to ſtudy thoſe grounds, rather to ſhew my wit, then for the ſake of information: Nor did I make any difference between the Articles of my Faith, and the Songs and Verſes which I got by heart. To me they ſeem'd all alike, and I lookt upon it only as an exerciſe of my Memory, which was put upon me to try whether I had a good one or no. How many times have I lamented afterwards my being ſo little taught the difference between Solid and Trivial! and my being left to my ſelf to make my choice of which of the two my Fancy beſt approv'd. Both Nuns and other Perſons, who are entruſted with the Education of Children, are very imprudent to make no diſtinction between things of ſo different a nature; but rather to permit the ſtudy of Trifles, before the Memory and the Heart are well ſeaſon'd with the firſt impreſſions of Truth and Vertue.

The reading of Romances brought me to reflect upon things, of which till then I had but a confus'd and imperfect apprehenſion. By reading them, I learnt there was a Paſſion that gave to Women an abſolute dominion over Men. And I was not a little overjoy'd to think, that I could as well as others pretend to that empire; and that perhaps I had an opportunity already to exerciſe that Power.

In ſhort, I call'd to mind, that when I liv'd with my Grandmother, there was a Perſon of Quality

who lov'd me, and who usually call'd me his little Queen. I recall'd to my memory all the marks that he gave me of his Affection: And I made no question but that that Affection was an effect of that same Passion which I found so well expres's'd in Romances. I was sorry I had bin ignorant of it so long; and that I had made no better use of my empire over that Lover. Who in regard he was a Person of Quality, and one that appear'd to have more merit then any of the rest with whom I was acquainted, seem'd to me most worthy of paying me his Assiduities. I resolv'd therefore to engage him to give me a Visit, that I might please my self with enjoying the honour of submitting a Man to my own Laws.

I was too young to have any other motive to this Attempt then vanity: Nor indeed was I acquainted with any other; neither did I believe that Love was any other thing then that same Power and Command wherewith I flatter'd my self.

The course which I took to engage the Marquis of *Bloffac* (for that was then his Title) to come to me, was to write to him. To which end, not knowing what I did, I copi'd out of several Romances, what seem'd to me the most endearing, to express that I very much desir'd to see him. That is to say, I wrote a most passionate and tender Letter, without being sensible of the thing which I expres's'd, and without divining in the least that there was any harm in writing after that manner. This without doubt is an effect the most innocent that the reading of Romances can produce in the mind of a young Person. But after all, it is a dangerous effect; seeing that by accustoming our selves to read the Language of Love, we expose our selves, how harmless soever our Intentions may be, to love the

name

name of it; and to feel the effects and power of it.

Romances therefore having taught me, that there was a secret and mysterious method to be observ'd in the delivery of Letters; I bethought my self of putting mine into a small Bundle of Rarities wrought by the Nuns, of which I pretended to make a Present to *Blossac* upon the Festival Day of the Nunnery's particular Saint. In this manner then I sent him my Letter, with orders to the Bearer to deliver the Bundle into his own hands. Thus had my Passion bin never so violent, it could not have taught me to take better measures then my own Vanity inspir'd into me. For the two Passions of Love and Vanity force Women to act for the most part much after the same manner, as I found by experience in the progress of my life.

Blossac receiv'd my Letter; and had always lookt upon me as a Child: But he found that Letter so witty, that his first thoughts advis'd him to shew it to my Parents, to the end they might see what an extraordinary Daughter they had. However, he met with so much Passion, so much tenderness in it, that he believ'd it impossible that I should write in such a manner, without being in some measure sensible of what I had written to him. And the younger I was, the more he flatter'd himself with being the first Object of a growing Passion: And whatever in my Letter seem'd to him to be above my years, he ascrib'd to nothing but Love. So that from thence forward he began to love me in earnest, and return'd me a most passionate Answer, wherein he promis'd to come and see me the next day.

However, I met with something in his Letter that offended me; for he call'd me his *Pretty Child*. Now I had never read that the Hero's in Romances

gave ſuch Language to their Miſtreſſes; ſo that I expected him with impatience, that I might have the pleaſure to abuſe him for it. He came; and becauſe he had not ſeen me in above a year before, he found me ſo well grown, though then but in the Twelfth of my Age, that the ſight of my Perſon compleated what my Letter had begun. He became my moſt Paſſionate Lover; nevertheleſs, being deſirous, before he diſcover'd his Love, to be aſſur'd, whether I had reaſon enough about me to ſuſtain the weight of ſuch a Declaration, he appli'd himſelf to me with the ſame terms of familiarity as formerly, calling me his Little Miſs, and his Pretty Sweetheart, and teling me with an Aire of Fondneſs, that I was the moſt delicate Girl in the World. All theſe low Titles I took ill; and therefore in the Tone of a Romantic Heroeſs, I talk'd to him as *Aſtrea* talks to *Celadon*, when ſhe baniſhes him her preſence. At firſt he laught at my Childiſh Indignation; but ſeeing me perſiſt in the ſame Language, he was ſo much the more at a loſs, becauſe he lov'd me with ſo much the more tenderneſs. Thereupon he came to a ſerious Explanation of himelf, and told me after ſuch a manner, as ſomewhat daunted me, that he was aſham'd at his years, to confeſs himſelf ſo weak as to have a Paſſion for me; however, that he could not forbear to let me know, as much a Child as I was, that his Life and his Repoſe depended upon me, and that he ſhould dye without an Aſſurance that my heart was his. And he pronounc'd theſe words in ſuch a manner, that they pierc'd my very Soul: And had I had but a little more Experience, I ſhould have underſtood to have made a diſtinction between him and others; and that it was no longer that I acted by the ſame Motive that oblig'd me to ſend for him.

I then

I then forgot all that Romances had taught me concerning the Diſdain and Pride of their Heroeſſes; I fell a weeping; and begging his pardon for having offended him; I aſſur'd him of the ſurrender of my heart, and that I would never ſay any thing to him agen that ſhould excite his Anger. He was overjoy'd to find ſuch an alteration in me, and continu'd his Arguments to perſuade me how paſſionately he lov'd me, when our Converſation was interrupted by the coming in of the Abbeſs; for then he fell a cockering me again with tenderneſſes ſuitable to my Age, and calling me Pretty Child, adviſ'd me to be a good Girl. Nor was it out of Policy that I forbore to ſhew my ſelf diſpleas'd with his Diſcourſe, but becauſe I found an inclination in my ſelf to pardon every thing in him but indifferency. I was ſo much afraid he did not love me, that having found an opportunity before we parted, to ask him whether he were ſtill offended, I oblig'd him to ſwear that he would love me as long as he liv'd.

Thus it was, that without knowing what it meant, I ſurrender'd my ſelf up to that fatal Paſſion that ſince has ſo much troubl'd my repoſe. 'Twas not for any other deſign that I deſir'd to ſee *Bleſſac*, but only to trample upon his Submiſſion, when I became ſo much his Slave, that I took delight in nothing elſe but thinking of him. To ſuch a Precipice had the aiery Vanity of Romances inſenſibly led me.

I lov'd, yet knew not what Love was: And I lov'd ſo much the more, becauſe I was ignorant what it was to love: Nor would my Ignorance permit me to contend with what I knew not. I ſaw nothing that frighted me in the kind Sentiments I had for *Bloſſac*; nor had I any deſire to be

afraid

afraid of Conſequences which I foreſaw not. I ſtudi'd nothing ſo much as how to pleaſe him, and find out ways to ſee him often. Romances then, that formerly were my chief delight, began to grow irkſome to me; I did not like it that their Heroeſſes ſhould take ſo much pleaſure in treating their Lovers ſo uncivilly: And I blam'd their Pride ſo much the more, the leſs I underſtood that it was a vertue to be proud. Thus whither is it that we may not be tranſported, when we unwarily deliver up our ſelves to a Danger which we underſtand not, yet for which we have a kindneſs! When I was alone, I would be writing Letters to *Bloſſac*; and though I knew not there was any harm in what I did, yet I was moſt terribly afraid of being taken in the Act. But it was impoſſible for me to be ſo cautious as to prevent it. Some of my Epiſtles were found, and carri'd to the Abbeſs, who bleſt her ſelf to ſee *Satan* ſo prevalent in a Girl of my years. She ſent for me, and ask'd me where I had learnt to write after that manner? I knew not what anſwer to make her, ſeeing her, as I thought, in ſuch an angry Mood. And my ſilence making her believe that I was better inſtructed, and more guilty then indeed I was, ſhe told me, I deſerv'd to be buri'd alive for writing ſuch Letters as thoſe. Upon that I fell a blubbering, and pleaded for my ſelf, that I did not think there had bin any harm in writing after ſuch a manner. But ſhe gave me ſuch a Juniper Lecture by way of anſwer, as open'd the eyes of my Underſtanding, and ſoon convinc'd me of my Errors; and I was ſo aſham'd of what I had done, that I began from that very moment to have as great an averſion for *Bloſſac*, as I had kindneſs before. But among all the Abbeſs's Pious Taunts, and Matronly Sentences, there was none that made ſo deep an impreſ-

impreſſion upon me, as her upbraiding me for having given a Man an occaſion to believe I was in love with him. She told me, there was nothing ſo mean and deſpicable; and that Virgins who had no more wit then ſo to expoſe themſelves, were the ſlight and contempt of thoſe very Men by whom they ſought to be belov'd.

This toucht me to the very Soul: So that I was not ſo much afraid of the Scandals and other Inconveniences, to which, as ſhe aſſur'd me, I had expos'd my ſelf, as I was aſham'd to have done a thing, which as they told me, would make me the ſcorn of the Perſon whom I lov'd.

I reſolv'd therefore not only not to write to *Bloſſac* any more, but never to ſee him agen. I promis'd the ſame to the Abbeſs, and I conſented to let my Paper and my Pens be taken from me, to let 'em ſee that I had a deſire, by my diſdain, to make amends for my overforwardneſs, which now I blam'd in my ſelf as much as they could do.

The Abbeſs had reaſon to believe, by my ingenuity and ſubmiſſion to her Corrections, that there was nothing but Innocence in what I had done. However, ſhe was one of thoſe who will never miſs an opportunity to exalt their own Merit, and get a Reputation for Zeal and Regularity, whatever becomes of their Neighbours. This Lady, who was never lookt upon to be one of the exacteſt Governeſſes in the World, inform'd my Parents of what had happen'd, in hopes that they would judge, by the Account ſhe gave 'em of her Vigilance, that ſhe was not a Woman that would ſuffer any other then Virgin *Maries* in her Houſe.

This was the firſt Stain that ever blemiſh'd my Reputation, and which inclin'd ſo many People to judg amiſs of my Conduct; and doubtleſs the Imprudence

prudence of the Abbeſs was the cauſe of all my Misfortunes. For had ſhe known how to manage this firſt Fault, I might perhaps have afterwards conſented to whatever they demanded of me, to repair it.

My Mother judg'd by thoſe Letters, that I had an inclination to Gallantry; which together with ſome other Reaſons that ſhe had to make me a Nun, made her give the Abbeſs a ſtrict charge to mould me for that courſe of life.

The Abbeſs perceiving how much I endeavour'd to obliterate the Fault with which I was upbraided, believ'd the change of my Behaviour to be an effect of my Repentance: She knew not that Pride was the cauſe of it, and that this Pride proceeded from no other Reaſon, but becauſe I would not be deſpis'd by *Bloſſac*. It never came into her thoughts that a Girl of no more then Thirteen years of Age ſhould be capable of ſuch a refin'd piece of Cunning. She believ'd I had quite forgot *Bloſſac*; and that now being recover'd from that little Love-frenzy of mine, I would readily yield to thoſe Reaſons ſhe ſhould make uſe of to perſuade me, that the only Heaven upon Earth was a Nunnery.

She told me that all my Relations knew what had paſs'd between *Bloſſac* and my ſelf: And that after ſuch a Tranſgreſſion they could not think of marrying me; becauſe no body would marry a Maid who had bin guilty at my years of an Intreague: That the Story had made a great noiſe, and done me ſo much injury, that there was no other way for me but to betake my ſelf to a Religious Life. Then ſhe made me a long Harangue upon the Pleaſures of Retirement; ſhe flatter'd me with hopes that I might ſuddenly come to be her Coadjutrix, and that ſhe would leave me her Abby.

I was

I was not ſo much a Child as not to ſee whither all this tended; nor ſo much a Fool as not to know that there was nothing but Innocence in the main thing with which they upbraided me. And I as readily found by the Abbeſs's Sermons, that my Relations had a great deſire to make a Nun of me. Now in regard there was nothing ſo remote from my Reſolutions, as the Sentiments which ſhe ſtrove to infuſe into me, I gave her this confident Anſwer, That that ſame Gallantry which ſhe inveigh'd againſt ſo much, was not a thing ſo criminal as ſhe would needs perſuade me. But though what you tell me, ſaid I, were true, yet if it be my Parents abſolute pleaſure that I muſt vail my ſelf, I make no queſtion but to obtain this Liberty from them at the leaſt, to make my choice of another Houſe.

The Abbeſs aſtoniſh'd at my Anſwer, and my Reſolution, endeavour'd to ſooth me up, and aſſur'd me ſhe would talk no more of it.

After all theſe Diſputes I perceiv'd in my ſelf a violent deſire to ſee *Bloſſac*, and to inform him of every thing that the Abbeſs had told me. For not doubting but that he would be glad to marry me, and for that he was otherwiſe a Perſon ſuitable to my humour, I thought I could not do better then to renew my Friendſhip with him. I quite forgot that petty Pride which I aſſum'd upon the diſcovery of our private Familiarity; nor was I afraid of his deſpiſing me when I renew'd thoſe Addreſſes that ſeem'd requiſite to recall him. And thus it came to paſs, that they reſtor'd me to my Paſſion by the cares which they took to divert me from it.

It was now near ten Months that he had heard no tydings of me, from the time that I had told him I would ſee him no more. He had endeavour'd to penetrate into the motive that induc'd me to

this

this change. But at length the Nuns having inform'd him, that I had ſhewn his Letters, and that I only made it my buſineſs to make him my Sport, he was aſham'd that he had ever had any kindneſs for me. He took me for a Child, and for one who had a Character of Inconſtancy and Deceit, which it became him to avoid; and with theſe thoughts he reſolv'd to forget me.

He thought me unworthy of his Sedulities; at what time I found a way to let him know, that I deſir'd to ſpeak with him, and that I deſir'd him to come diſguis'd to the Window of the Speaking-place, where I promis'd to be at ſuch an Hour. But he receiv'd the Meſſage with a diſdainful ſmile, and bid the Meſſenger tell me, he would come and ſee me when I had learnt more wit.

What a Rage was I in, when they brought me this Anſwer! I began to believe what the Abbeſs had told me, that forwardneſs in Perſons of my Sex always drew contempt upon themſelves.

I was ſenſible of all the mortification that could caſt down a Perſon naturally vain, when her Vanity is humbl'd to the loweſt degree. I could not tell what courſe to take to diſingage my ſelf from the Trouble which I had brought upon my ſelf. Prompted by my Revenge, ſometimes I fell muſing which way to take away the Life of a perfidious Contemner of my Favours; but then again, condemning ſo violent a Reſolution, nothing would ſerve me, but to throw my ſelf at his Feet, that I might regain him by my Tears. In ſhort, a thouſand extravagant Ideas rowl'd in my mind, which the reading of Romances had furniſh'd me withal, and which my Youth confirm'd.

After I had ſpent two or three Months in this doleful condition, I fell into a languiſhing Diſtemper,

per, the cauſe of which the Nuns were ignorant of. I admir'd the guidance of my Diſcretion at thoſe years. For I made no body the Confident of my Grievances. And my vanity made me a Diſſembler; for I was too much humbl'd in my own Eyes, to make my ſelf lower in the Eyes of others.

At length, overwhelm'd with grief, and not knowing what to reſolve, I made as if I had had a liking to a Religious Life.

This alteration in my Behaviour aſtoniſh'd the Abbeſs and the Nuns, who miſtook the irregular motions of a Heart too much devoted to what it lov'd, for the effects of Grace. Never did Virgin teſtify a more ardent Zeal to take the Vaile upon her, then my ſelf. For I was impatient to try, whether the noiſe of ſuch a Sacrifice would not awake *Bloſſae* to a recollecting himſelf: And on the other ſide, I had before my Eyes the Honour which ſuch a goodly Action would procure me in the World.

So ſoon as my Relations were inform'd of my Deſign, they haſten'd me to take the Habit upon me: And indeed conſidering the ſteps that I had made, I could not well go back. However, I found an Expedient to ſuſpend the execution of a Deſign which began already to terrify me. I told my Parents, that I did not find they led ſuch regular Lives as I could wiſh, in the Nunnery where I was; and therefore being deſirous to renounce the World in good earneſt, 'twas my intention to make choice among all the Nunneries, of one the moſt Auſtere that I could hear of.

Now no ſooner had I declar'd my reſolution to go to another Houſe, but the Abbeſs and the Nuns endeavour'd to diſſuade me from taking the Habit upon me in any Houſe whatever. They told me that I was not of a Conſtitution proper for a Con-

vent;

vent; and ſome there were who made me the Confident of their ſecret diſguſts againſt Retirement.

I aſcrib'd all this good Counſel to the irregularity of their Lives: Nor indeed was I at all troubl'd to have found out new Reaſons for my leaving their Convent. I was therefore ſtill importunate to be carri'd to another Nunnery; my Mother alſo compli'd with my deſires; and ſo I left the Abbeſs and her Abby, not knowing whether I had reaſon to be ſorry or to rejoyce.

The Nuns no ſooner ſaw me out of their Houſe, but they told me, like a company of Charitable Baggages as they were, that I was a Coquetting Slut, whom they were overjoy'd to be rid of; neither did they fail to make my pretended Amorous Intreague the ſubject of their Tittle-tattle to thoſe who were ignorant of it before.

When I came to the Convent I had made choice of, as well for that I was not yet Fifteen years of Age, as becauſe the Nuns had bin inform'd of all the Reports which had been ſpread abroad concerning me, they thought it proper to defer the putting me among the Noviciats, but only gave me the Habit and Title of a *Poſtulant*.

This Convent ſeem'd to me quite different from the other: For the Nuns liv'd all in a perfect Regularity; every one appear'd contented with her Condition; there was a holy Emulation among 'em; and in ſhort, they perform'd all their Duties with an extraordinary Exactneſs. More then this, the general opinion of their Sanctity had drawn to their Houſe Ladies and Virgins of the higheſt Quality; and they were ſo accuſtom'd never to frequent other Houſes, that they would not ſo much as converſe with a Lay-ſiſter. They deſir'd always to have Prelates to officiate at all their Solemn Feſtivals, and never

never to hear any but the most famous Preachers. Now whether this Affectation were altogether exempt from Pride, and all suspicion of Vanity, is a question not so easily determin'd.

One would have thought however, that being so vain as I was, I should have agreed with a Convent where I met with so much Vanity; but besides that I had very little Piety, I scorn'd that Ridiculous Vanity that sacrifices only to Rank and Outward shew. I was only an Idolatress of that vanity which Beauty and Merit inspire; with some kindness too for that other Vanity, to see my self ador'd by the Person for whom I had an affection.

And this Vanity made me still retain a lively remembrance of the Affront which, as I thought, *Bossac* had put upon me: Nor did I so loudly proclaim, as I said before, my Intention to be a Nun, but only to try, whether the Noise of my Design would rouse him to prevent it. But I heard nothing of him; and in the mean time the Day appointed for me to take the Habit upon me, drew near.

Some few days before, my Father came to see me, and putting the Question to me, whether I really persisted in my Resolution to take the Veil, only my Te[illegible] made answer for me. By that he understood more then I durst let him know. He told me, he was glad I had not so much Zeal, as others would persuade him I had, for a Condition which he could not permit me to embrace, as having resolv'd to marry me to a Gentleman whom he had made choice of for me. He farther added, That the Match was suitable to the Condition of his Affairs, and that he was come to talk with me about it. He did not name the Husband whom he had design'd me; only he told me in ge-

neral, that he was a Perſon with whom I ſhould live happily, well deſcended, and of a good Eſtate; but that the Buſineſs was to be ſpeedily concluded, and to be kept private from the knowledge of my Mother; for that though the Match were never ſo advantagious, ſhe would oppoſe my Marriage, having ſuch an averſion as ſhe had for my advancement, and abſolutely reſolving to make me a Nun. He told me moreover, that to make ſure work, he had deſign'd to take me from the Convent by force; and gave me an account what meaſures he had ſtudy'd for that purpoſe.

I had not ſo eaſily conſented to my Father's Deſign, but that I imagin'd at the ſame time, that the Husband he had provided for me might be *Bloſſac* himſelf. I had alſo ſome remnants of Romantick Notions rowling in my Head, which made me believe that *Bloſſac* had an intention to make a Knight-Errant Wedding of it, by ſome pleaſing ſurpriſe, which would be ſo much the more agreeable to my Humour. I ask'd my Father therefore whether he were not the Man? And the manner of my Father's refuſal to explain himſelf, fully perſuaded me that it could be no other then *Bloſſac*. Beſides, I was ſo wrapt up with a belief of this Fancy, that I durſt not preſs my Father any further, for fear of finding my ſelf deceiv'd. So that I only told him I ſhould be ready to obey him in every thing. Thus while my Mother was preparing for me a Religious Vail, my Father was providing for me Nuptial Sheets. A thing perhaps which never happen'd before, that two ſuch different Ceremonies ſhould be preparing at the ſame time for the ſame Perſon.

Some days after this Diſcourſe with my Father, he return'd to the Convent, bringing my Mother

with

with him: And then it was that he desir'd her to let him take me out from the Company, that he might have the consolation of taking his last farewel of me, since he was after that to resign me wholly to God and the Blessed Virgin. My Mother consented; and then my Father taking me by the hand, while my Mother was talking with the Nuns, led me into the Court. At the same time three sturdy Fellows came to us, and taking me up in their Arms, carry'd me without the Gate, and then threw me into a Coach with six Horses. Presently the Coachman drove away, and I was out of sight in the twinkling of an Eye.

My Father being now to act his part, return'd in a seeming haste to the speaking-Room, and with an aire of Grief and Fury told my Mother a plausible Story, such as his Invention had supply'd him with, and then pretending a world of eagerness to pursue the Ravishers, he flew to his own Coach, leaving my Mother half maz'd, and the Convent in such an uproar, as might well be the effect of so strange and unexpected an Accident.

My Mother, who suspected not my Father in the least, accus'd *Blessac* to be the Contriver and Author of This, and swore she would spare for no cost, till she had obtain'd full satisfaction for this Violence.

On the other side, my Father, who knew better then any body what was become of me, made the Coachman drive this way and t'other way, till he had almost tir'd his Horses, and then sending him back to my Mother, bid him tell her that he was going to take post in pursuit of me, according to such directions as he had receiv'd from the Country People.

In the mean time the Coach, wherein I was, whirl'd it away full speed; never stopping till it was toward night, that we came to a Place which I was altogether unacquainted with, and where my Father met us about an hour after our Arrival.

As for my own part, during the whole Journey, I could not find out for my life who the Lady, nor the three Men were, that bore me company. They answer'd to all my Questions, *That my Father would satisfy me.*

When he arriv'd, he told me the Lady was a Friend of his, whom he had desir'd to keep me company; and that the three Men were honest Fellows, and faithful Servants of his; how that he would not leave me till he had deliver'd me safe into the hands of my Husband, who liv'd at such a Place, which he nam'd, and where his Estate lay. All this while these Stories did nothing correspond with my Imaginations that this Husband might be *Blossac*: So that now beginning to find I was mistaken, I conjur'd my Father to have pity upon me, and not to sacrifice me to a Person for whom perhaps I might not have the least inclination. But he only bid me have patience, and all would be well. Thus we continu'd our Journey, and much ado I had to resist the Mortal Inquietudes that turmoil'd my Thoughts; though I did not altogether despair of finding such a Person in my Husband, whose Complacencies might make me forget *Blossac.*

In the mean time I observ'd, during our Journey, that one of the Men that accompany'd me would be always viewing me with a nice and inquisitive Eye; and besides that, was very officious to please me. Nevertheless, it never came into my mind so much as to guess that he was the Person

design'd

deſign'd to be my Husband. However he was the Man. And when we were come within half a day's journey from the Village whither we were traveling, he left us, without diſcovering who he was. So ſoon as he was gone, my Father askt me, what I thought of him? and whether he were not a handſome Gentleman? And theſe Queſtions he put to me after ſuch a manner, that I knew beforehand what he was going to ſay to me. However I made him no reply to his Interrogatories, for fear my anſwer ſhould not pleaſe him. I know not whether he found by me, that I had no great ſtomach to the perſon of the Man; however, after he had acknowledg'd him to be the Husband he had provided for me, he told me, he had only left us, to return agen and meet us in an Equipage more becoming his Quality. How are poor Maids to be pity'd, when their Parents ſeek only their own Intereſt in the preferment of their Children! I will now then tell ye the Reaſons why my Father ſacrific'd me to this Gentleman.

He was the Son of a Counſellor of the Parliament of his Province, who not having any inclination to the Law, had purchas'd a very great Lordſhip, with an intention to get it erected into a Marquiſate. Which being ſomewhat difficult to obtain, he had recourſe to my Father, who had formerly bin his Father's intimate Friend, and who by his Credit at Court procur'd him what he deſir'd. His Eſtate indeed was very conſiderable, and therefore he was doubtleſs an Advantageous Match for a Virgin who had no Portion.

There was yet another Reaſon of greater importance that preſs'd my Father to marry me. For this Gentleman, after he came to his Eſtate, had lent my Father a Conſiderable Sum of Money; and

he had ſo order'd his Buſineſs, that my Marriage was to extinguiſh the Debt. 'Tis true, he did not tell me all this at firſt; he only told me that he was utterly ruin'd if I did not comply with his Deſires. But when he heard me conjure him not to precipitate my Marriage, he thought it behov'd him to tell me the whole Truth, with this farther Circumſtance, that my Mother knew nothing of the Debt, and that ſhe would be like a Mad-woman, if ever it came to her Ears.

I did not complain to my Father for ſeeking by my Marriage to repair the Decays of his Eſtate; but I could not forbear telling him, that I was ſorry he did not ſooner let me know the Reaſons that induc'd him to marry me, for that I was perſuaded that if he would have beſtow'd me upon the Marquiſs of *Bloſſac*, he would have been as generous to have engag'd the payment of the Debt upon the ſame Condition. At which my Father fell a laughing, and embracing me, My dear Child, ſaid he, thou doſt not underſtand the World; we live not in an Age, where Perſons of Eſtates pay ſo dear for their Wives.

I reply'd, that he was not acquainted with *Bloſſac*'s Humour, and that if he pleas'd, before he marry'd me, to make him the propoſal of marrying me upon the ſame Conditions that he gave me to another, I made no queſtion but that he would accept 'em.

I gave this Character of *Bloſſac*, becauſe I lov'd him; and not being able to conceal from my ſelf the Affection I had for him, I endeavour'd to perſuade my ſelf, that the Good Qualities which I conceited in him, render'd him a Perſon worthy of my love: And judging of his Sentiments by my own, I imagin'd he would never refuſe to obtain me at

any

any rate whatever. Thus I forgat the Contempt of which I had till then accus'd him: And I had ſtill the vanity to flatter my ſelf that he would never have patiently endur'd my being marry'd to another, had he bin inform'd of my Deſtiny. Upon this, I deſir'd my Father to let me write to him, and to put off the Wedding till I receiv'd his Anſwer. But my Father told me I was a Chicken, to imagin that a Man from whom I had not heard in ſo long time, would impair his Eſtate to purchaſe a Bedfellow. Yet ſuch were ſtill the vain Hopes, wherewith I was wont to flatter my ſelf in the ſucceeding courſe of my Life: For I always had a good opinion of thoſe that lov'd me.

In the mean time my Husband met us with a Magnificent Train; and then, I muſt acknowledge, he appear'd to me quite another thing then what he ſeem'd to be upon the Road. So that after I had for ſome time wiſtly view'd and conſider'd him, I felt no farther reluctancy to give him my hand; and therefore making a vertue of neceſſity, I reſolv'd to make the beſt of my Fortue.

We ſtay'd no longer in the Town where we arriv'd, then to get all things ready for the Nuptial Ceremonies: During which time I was viſited by all the Neighbours; and in regard my Father was with me, no body ever dreamt that I had bin hurry'd away in a Coach and Six Horſes to a ſtollen Wedding.

So ſoon as the fatal Knot was ty'd, we went to my Husband's Lordſhip, where my Father left me, having all the reaſon in the world to believe that he had diſpos'd of me to a plentiful and happy Being. He had before his departure written to my Mother, that he had met with my Raviſher, and had forc'd him to marry me: That I had bin more

fortunate then prudent; for that I had ſuffer'd my ſelf to be forc'd from the Convent by a Perſon of a great Eſtate, and of no mean Birth.

My Father was deſirous that I ſhould approve his writing to my Mother after that manner; and that my being forc'd from the Nunnery ſhould be thought a Contrivance of my own. And this was another Blot upon my Reputation, and of which I too plainly foreſaw the Conſequences. For no body that ſaw my Father's Letter, queſtion'd the truth of my being ſtollen by force; and they as little doubted that it was my Contrivance, becauſe they were ignorant that I was altogether a ſtranger to my Husband at that time. Beſides, my former Inclination for *Bloſſac*, ſo well known, render'd all that my Father had written too probable to be deni'd: Nor was it any wonder that I ſhould have ſo much wit, at Sixteen years of Age, to manage a Nuptial Amour, which was the only Remedy I had to prevent my being lockt up in a Cloyſter.

Thus it fell out, that though I never deſerv'd it, I had all the Honour, or rather all the Shame of this Intreague: My Wit was admir'd; but People neither thought, nor ſpoke ſo well of my Prudence and Conduct. The Story of my being taken by force out of a Nunnery, was the Diſcourſe of all *Paris* for a long time, and every body told it after a different manner. The Idea that all Perſons had of my Wit and Contrivance for the carrying on of an Amoros Intriegue, ſhelter'd my Father from having any hand in it. But the Relation it ſelf of the Matter of Fact was ſo remote from Truth, that I ſhould have deni'd it my ſelf, had I heard it repeated; for there was no diſguiſe which they did not make me put on to facilitate my Eſcape out of the Cloyſter, inſomuch that I was ſtrangely ſurpriz'd to

find

find that a certain Author, in a Book, wherein he has the goodneſs to name me, ſhould preſume to aver, that I was diſguis'd in Man's Apparal, and that I made my Eſcape in a Gardner's Cloaths. Thus if there be but the leaſt foundation for Slander, ſhe believes her ſelf fully authoriz'd to publiſh whatever Malice dares invent. And I am aſſur'd that ſo many Scandalous Stories as are every day made upon Perſons of my Sex are only the effect of this Malignity. But 'tis too early yet to make Reflections. I have many other Adventures to recount, wherein you will find that Slander has as little ſpar'd me, though no more guilty, then in this.

One of the firſt, to whom the Story of my being forc'd from the Convent, and my Marriage, was told with all the moſt malicious Circumſtances that Publick Report could imbelliſh it withal, was *Bloſſac*. Which when he had heard, he ſeem'd to repent his refuſing to meet me at the Time and Place appointed. For he had no other Reaſons to forbear ſeeing me, then the noiſe which our Letters had made; and not believing, that being ſo young as I was, I could have Diſcretion and Conduct enough to make uſe of all the Means and Opportunities that might preſent themſelves to favour our Private Meetings, he reſolv'd to ſtay till I had more Judgment. And beſides, he was not well ſatisfi'd with me, becauſe he ſtill conceited it was I who had inform'd the Abbeſs of our private Amour. At leaſt it was this that he told me in excuſe of himſelf. For my part, I am perſuaded, by what happen'd after that, that from the time of thoſe Reports he ceas'd to love me, and that his Flame did not re-kindle, till the noiſe of my being forc'd from the Convent gave him to under-

ſtand,

ſtand, that I was not ſo much a Child as he took me to be.

However it were, when he underſtood that I was marri'd to a Perſon much below him in Quality, and inferior to him in Eſtate, he reſolv'd to find me out, not able to forget in what a paſſionate manner formerly I was wont to breathe into his Amorous Breaſt my Vows and Reſolutions to be always his. Nor was it an unuſual thing for him to viſit the Province where my Reſidence was, becauſe his Grandfather had bin Governor of it; and for that the Gentry of the Country had a great value for his Reſpect and Name.

Book the Second.

WHILE *Bloſſac* was meditating the Recovery of my Affection, I was wholly taken up with the care of pleaſing my Husband. Me thought I lov'd no body but him, tho in truth I could make daily diſcoveries, as well in his Diſpoſition, as in his Perſon, of thoſe defects which in ſome meaſure ſtagger'd my Inclination. He was a Man naturally given to debauchery, and one who preferr'd Wine and Good Chear before all other Pleaſure. He would be frequently fuddl'd; and in that Condition he was very offenſive and diſobliging in his Language. He would be ſtill upbraiding me, that inſtead of bringing him a Portion, I had bin the cauſe of making him part with ſome of his Choiceſt Acres: And this Reproach he would uſually throw upon me in Public. All People blam'd him, and took my part at thoſe times; but there was no alteration; it was not an Injury that was offer'd me now and then. Nevertheleſs, I diſſembl'd it ſo well, that I gave him not the leaſt occaſion to accuſe me of failing in my Complacency and Reſpect for him. I led a Life in the Country very retir'd; having only the Society of one Gentleman that liv'd in the Neighbourhood, a Perſon of Wit and Learning. This was *Made Balzac:* He brought me to love Reading and Study; and by his Advice I apply'd my ſelf to read more ſolid and ſubſtantial Authors then any I had hitherto known; I found my ſelf alſo well enclin'd to learn the Languages, and to write with more

exactneſs

exactneſs then the generality of Women. This was both a diverſion to me, and procur'd me much honour in the Province; ſo that I became an Umpreſs among the Wits, and Judge of their Works. Now receiving ſo many Verſes every day as I did, it may well be thought that they were ſent me compos'd in my Praiſe; and among Sparkling Wits, I'll aſſure ye, there were ſome that made love to me in Verſe. But I receiv'd nothing from their hands, with which I did not make my Husband acquainted; nor did I perceive that he had any inclination to Jealouſy. But I did not long enjoy this Repoſe. Some body inform'd him, that before I was Twelve years of Age I had written Amorous Letters to *Bloſſac*, which had made a great deal of noiſe. Which made him believe, that having diſcover'd ſuch an early inclination to Love, I muſt needs retain it ſtill; and being moreover conſcious of his ill uſage of me, a conceit came into his head that I could not love him, and that therefore I muſt have an Amorous Intriegue elſewhere.

Nor was it long before he knew of whom it was that it behov'd him to be jealous. *Bloſſac* was come into the Province with ſome of his Friends; and preſently they came all together to pay me a Viſit. I was alone in the Caſtle: But it is impoſſible to expreſs in what a ſtrange diſorder all the motions of my Body were, when I beheld the Man who once had bin ſo dear to me. On the other ſide, he ſeem'd to me no leſs embarraſs'd then my ſelf. After the firſt Complements, his Friends commended the Situation and Beauty of the Caſtle, and deſir'd to ſee the Apartiments. Which while they were doing, *Bloſſac* made a dextrous Eſcape from his Friends, and having found a way to ſpeak to me in Private, he gave me to underſtand in the moſt tender Ex-

preſſions

preſſions in the World, that he had always lov'd me, and that I could not in juſtice deprive him of a Heart which I had formerly giv'n him. But I had ſtill ſo much power left as to conjure him never to think more of me, at leaſt, never to make me any more Viſits. Nor did I forget to forbid him to write to me, fearing as I acknowledg'd to him, that my Husband would have no good opinion of any familiar Intercourſe between us.

While we were thus in parley together, my Huſband arriv'd, and it was no body's fault but his own, if he did not perceive that *Bloſſac* and I had both been weeping. I am apt to believe that he was ſenſible of the diſorder wherein he found us, but he diſſembl'd it, and all the reſt of the day demean'd himſelf with great civility.

The Marquis of *Sauveboeuf* was one of thoſe who accompani'd *Bloſſac*; and reſembl'd very much the Young Sparks of the Times: He was inconſiderate, and lov'd to talk to Women without diſcretion. I know not whether or no he had ever heard, that I had once a kindneſs for *Bloſſac*, or whether it were out of a humour to pleaſe himſelf by croſſing my Husband; but all the time we ſate chatting together, he would ſtill be telling him, that I was the moſt Beautiful Woman that ever he beheld in his life; and frankly confeſs'd that he would make love to me, but that I liv'd in a Province ſo remote. However, becauſe what *Sauveboeuf* prattl'd was only in jeſt, my Husband took no offence at it. So that when I ſaw that my Husband ſeem'd ſo well to underſtand Ralliery, to remove that jealouſy which he had of *Bloſſac*, I reſolv'd, though very imprudently, to beſtow the main of my Civilities upon *Sauveboeuf*, and ſeem deſirous to pleaſe him. Wherein I did very unadviſedly; for *Bloſſac* grew

jealous

jealous of it; my Husband's Suſpicions were thereby confirm'd; *Sauveboeuf* lov'd me in earneſt; and all three took me for the Arranteſt Cocquet in nature.

After our Company had left us, my Husband no longer put any conſtraint upon himſelf, but began to reproach me with what I had formerly done for *Bloſſac*, and with what I had now done for *Sauveboeuf*; he ſwore he would not be the Cully of my Amours, and that I ſhould never ſtir out of the Caſtle.

Some days after, he made a ſhew of having intercepted one of *Bloſſac*'s Letters which confirm'd his Suſpicions. He had bin ſo cunningly malicious as to compoſe the Letter himſelf: But I knew not what to think of it: For indeed, notwithſtanding the Injunction I had laid upon *Bloſſac* not to write to me, I was afraid leſt he might have ventur'd a Letter; and I found my ſelf in a ſtrange Labyrinth.

And here I will aver it with the ſame ſincerity with which I purpoſe to write theſe Memoirs, that it was not ſo much what the Jealouſy of my Huſband caus'd me to fear, that buſied moſt my thoughts in the ſad Reflections which I made upon my Deſtiny, as the conſequence of an Amour, of which I had formerly bin ſenſible, and which had then got the maſtery of my Heart. I was more pleas'd to think that I was belov'd by *Bloſſac*, then I was afraid of my Husband's Reſentment. I pardon'd *Bloſſac* alſo for his imprudence in writing to me: And laſtly, Whatever ſeem'd to aſſure me of his Fidelity, made a deeper impreſſion upon me, then all the Dangers to which he expos'd me. Nevertheleſs, I will ſay thus much more with the ſame ſincerity, that I had no deſign in all this, contrary

to my Duty. I was alſo prepar'd to ſuffer whatever my Husband ſhould inflict upon me. Nor did I hope for any other happineſs, then to obſerve a blind obedience to his Humour, and to foſter at the bottom of my Heart the ſecret pleaſure of loving another, with ſo much the more fidelity, becauſe I was reſolv'd to yield nothing to my Paſſion. What an Example of Vertue ſhould I have bin, had I had a Husband endu'd with greater Prudence! But he ſpar'd me ſo little, and took ſo much care to cry me down, that Vexation and Deſpite made me loſe ſomething of the delicacy of my Sentiments. 'Twas my Opinion that I might ſeek a means to ſecure my Repoſe, provided I did nothing that could bring reproach upon my Actions.

My Husband's behaviour toward me, gave occaſion to all the Reports that were ſpread abroad at that time: 'Twas believ'd he did not uſe me ſo, without juſt cauſe: Nay, it was reported, that during the Viſit which *Blaſſac* paid me, my Huſband had ſurpriz'd me in the very Act.

My Husband gave credit to that Scandal, and conceited with himſelf, that it became him to treat me as if I had bin guilty. So that the fear of being oppreſs'd, made me ſtudy the moſt ſpeedy way to free my ſelf out of his hands. To that purpoſe, one of my Women, and my ſelf, diſguis'd our ſelves in the Habit of Country Girls, and intermixing our ſelves with the Workmen that wrought in the Caſtle, we went out in the dusk of the Evening along with them, and walk'd it to a Place where a Lacquey, whoſe Fidelity I had gain'd by Reward, ſtaid for us with Horſes.

After we had rode all Night, we came the next Morning to a Convent, the Abbeſs of which had promis'd me ſanctuary.

So

So ſoon as I was ſafe there, I wrote to my Huſband, complaining of his Severity, which had conſtrain'd me to betake my ſelf to flight: And to my Father, to inform him of the Reaſons why I left my Husband. I beſought both the one and the other to examine without paſſion whether I had deſerv'd ſuch uſage. My Affection alſo tempted me to write to *Bloſſac*: But I had ſtrength enough to reſiſt that Temptation; fearing leſt my Letter might be intercepted, and produc'd as a Teſtimony to prove me guilty, at a time when it ſo much concern'd me to appear innocent.

My Husband made me no return; But my Father ſent me word, that I had done ill to leave him; that he would write to him, in order to engage him to take me home again; and that he would not fail to be ſpeedily with me, and be a means to return me reconcil'd into his hands.

How eaſy is it for People who behold the Misfortunes of others only at a diſtance, to take that courſe which then my Father took! I was ſo ill ſatisfi'd with his Letter, that I wrote him an Anſwer, That I would rather dye then return to my Huſband, who being the firſt to accuſe his Wife of a Diſorder, which he well knew ſhe was innocent of, had thereby acquir'd a right to miſuſe her when he pleas'd.

My Father to appeaſe me, and at the ſame time to convince me that I was in the wrong, ſent me a Letter which my Husband had written to him, wherein he only complain'd of my little Affection for him, without mentioning a word of thoſe Jealouſies and Suſpicions which he had manifeſted to me: Proteſting on the other ſide, that he had always ador'd me, and ſwearing that he would ſpare for nothing to make me forget the Cauſes which

which he might have given me to complain of him.

My Father was mov'd with the Tenderneſs that appear'd in that Letter; and at firſt I was mollifi'd with it my ſelf; ſo little of evil did my Heart contain, and ſo eaſy would it have bin for my Husband to have liv'd happily with me, would he have bin ſo pleas'd himſelf. But at length, upon a review of his Letter, I perceiv'd the Spirit of it, and I ſaw well that his Softneſs was only an Artifice to ſurprize me. And this confirm'd me more then ever in my Reſolution never to return home agen.

All this while my Reputation was cruelly attack'd: And then I began to underſtand, that of all the Reſolutions that a Woman, whether guilty or innocent, can take, the worſt is to leave her Huſband's Houſe. Yet after all, how prejudicial ſoever this Reſolution was to my Reputation, it ſeem'd neceſſary for my Repoſe, and I was of opinion that my Quiet ought to be more dear to me then my Honour. Doubtleſs this was an Illuſion: For the one cannot be loſt without the other: And an honeſt Woman muſt never hope for repoſe, that neglects the care of her Honour. Such are the Extremities to which we are reduc'd by Matrimony. What Woman therefore would engage in it, did ſhe but conſider, that there is no other remedy for an unfortunate Woman, but to endure, without daring to complain of her Sufferings, or ſeek the meaps to avoid 'em?

But in regard, that when I marri'd, I did not apprehend it was my duty to render my ſelf unhappy, I only made it my endeavour to ſet my ſelf at liberty. And I may alſo ſay, That the leſs ground I ſaw for the Reports that were ſpread abroad againſt my Honour, the more Courage, and the

greater Reſolution I had to contemn 'em. But I muſt alſo confeſs, that the more I was perſuaded that People had an ill opinion of me, the more I accuſtom'd my ſelf to ſlight the Probabilities that might confirm it. I minded only to preſerve my ſelf innocent. That was all the vertue and the merit which I propos'd to my ſelf. Neither did my Delicacy aim ſo far as to appear exactly what I was: whether it were, that I deſpair'd of ſucceſs, or that the love of my repoſe made that Niceneſs ſeem to me quite out of ſeaſon. But in ſhort, 'twas only the obſtinacy of People to cry me down, which fix'd me in that diſpoſition of mind. I wiſh that Women, who are under the ſame Circumſtances, may not follow my Example; if there be any one however that can do otherwiſe.

But to let my Father ſee that my Husband's Letter was full of Artifice, I ſent him a new Scroll of all his ſevere Uſage and Menaces with which he continually worri'd me, and put me into hourly Frights; and conjur'd him not to overwhelm me with Deſpair, by obliging me to live with him again. I muſt confeſs, that my Husband's ill uſage of me was not ſufficient to authorize a Separation; but it was too terrible for me to endure. I tremble every time I think upon it, that he ſhould threaten to keep me lockt up in the Caſtle; and it raiſes my Anger when I call to mind the injurious and threatning Language which he continually peal'd in my Ears. More then this, I did not believe that a Woman was bound to ſtay till utmoſt Extremities to be ſeparated from a Husband: Nor did I much mind whether the Law or my Parents made the Separation, provided we might be parted.

In the mean time I underſtood that my Father, inſtead of returning an Anſwer to my laſt Letter,

was

was preparing to deliver me back into my Husband's poſſeſſion.

On the other ſide, my Mother, who was afraid of nothing more then that I ſhould return to *Paris*, and put her to charges, wrote me troubleſome Letters, wherein ſhe gave me thoſe admirable Leſſons, which I much queſtion whether ſhe would have practis'd her ſelf, had ſhe bin in my Condition.

This made me take a Reſolution which I withſtood at firſt; but which, after all, was that which flatter'd me moſt, and of which the very thought afforded me conſolation in the midſt of my Troubles and Afflictions. I wrote to *Bloſſac*, and gave him an Account of my Condition, deſiring his Advice and Aſſiſtance. However, becauſe I was ſtill afraid leſt my Letter ſhould be intercepted, I let nothing fall from my Pen that might give him the leaſt hint that I had ſtill a Paſſion for him. I only ſeem'd to repair to him, as to a general Friend, not knowing where elſe to addreſs my ſelf. But this Precaution quite ruin'd me in the good opinion of *Bloſſac*, or rather ſerv'd as a pretence for his Inconſtancy. For certain it is, that if he had always lov'd me, he would never have quarrell'd with me for making ſo little a ſhew of my Paſſion, becauſe he might well judge that I could not in prudence write otherwiſe, conſidering the Circumſtances I was under.

I have already told ye, that he was jealous of my Civilities to *Sauveboeuf*. This Jealouſy was ſtrengthen'd by the many Reports which my Husband had ſpread about to my Diſgrace. For in all Companies where he took pains to diſhonour me, *Sauveboeuf*'s Name was not forgotten. And the very naming of a Perſon who was fam'd for being one of the greateſt Intrieguers about the Coun-

try, was enough to render the Calumny probable.

Now *Bloſſac* not finding in my Letter my former tenderneſs of Expreſſions, believ'd me another Woman; and that it was not out of inclination or preference that I addreſs'd my ſelf to him, but out of pure neceſſity. So that he was neither a Lover that had the Tenderneſs, nor a Friend that had the Generoſity to ſerve me. He return'd me an Anſwer the flatteſt, the moſt ſpropoſitous, and the moſt offenſive in the World, reproaching me with my ill Conduct, and my natural propenſity to Coquettry. Alas! he forgot that 'twas himſelf who had infus'd that propenſity into me: And his Perfidiouſneſs went ſo far as to make that criminal in me, which I had only done for his ſake.

I read over his Letter no leſs then ten times, not being able to perſuade my ſelf that ever he could have been capable of ſo much Ingratitude as to write to me in that manner. But being fully at length convinc'd of it, I ceas'd from that moment to have any longer for him, I will not ſay, not only the leaſt Inclination, but the leaſt Eſteem. I was aſtoniſh'd that I ſhould be ſo long before I underſtood it; and I repented that I had not taken a Reſolution to deſpiſe him, from the very time that he refus'd to give me the meeting already ſpoken of. This ſpeedy change in my heart in reference to *Bloſſac*, convinc'd me that there is not any Woman ſenſible of her Honour, who is proof againſt ſome certain Injuries. From that time forward I could never endure either to ſee, or have any value for him. All that I could do, in conſideration of the Sentiments which he had inſpir'd into me, was only never to name him. I know not whether all Women will approve this ſpeedy Reſolution of mine to forget him. But I can hardly believe there is any Wo-

man ſo low-ſpirited, as to continue her Affection to a Man that ſhould forſake her in neceſſity, and under a ſlight Pretence, when unfortunate only for his ſake. We may pardon Inconſtancy, Fantaſtical Humour, and even Injuries themſelves, when they are not the Character of a Baſe and Intereſted Heart; but I cannot believe it other then a Crime to love a Man who ſuffers a Woman whom he has lov'd, and who craves his Aſſiſtance, to become a prey to her Enemies. He ought to have ſerv'd me without any heſitation, and that done, he might have choſen whether he would have lov'd me or no. And therefore in my opinion I did no more then what any Rational Woman would have done, in defacing him out of my heart.

So ſoon as I had receiv'd the foremention'd Letter, and that it had caus'd ſo ſuddain a change in my Affection all things, methought began to look with a new face. I did not think my Husband's Behaviour ſo hateful as it ſeem'd to be: I blam'd my ſelf for having left him; and I expected the arrival of my Father with as much impatience, as fear of ſeeing him before. I found no reluctancy to ſubmit to what he had propounded to me; and I lookt upon the Misfortunes which I had ſo much dreaded, to be no other then the effects of vain Terror. By which we may ſee, that Love is that which gives what Tincture it pleaſes to things; and that when a Woman ceaſes to have a Paſſion for another Man beſides her Husband, ſhe has courage enough, either not to magnify the cauſes of her fear, or elſe not to be afraid at all. How happy had I bin, had I conſider'd theſe things ſooner, and had always remember'd 'em during the continu'd courſe of my Life.

How great a power did my Father believe he had over me, when he beheld me ſo ſubmiſſive to what-

ever he requir'd of me! However, he could not gueſs at the Reaſons that render'd me ſo pliable. He aſcrib'd my Docility to my own Good Nature, and his Paternal Authority; and he had ſuch an eſteem and friendſhip for me, that he ſwore, if ever my Husband gave me any juſt cauſe to complain of him, he would come himſelf to deliver me out of his hands, and force him by dint of Sword to do me juſtice. I told my Father, that I hop'd there would be no cauſe for any ſuch Extremities, ſeeing that I ſhould ſo demean my ſelf toward my Husband, that he himſelf would do me juſtice, and repair the Injuries he had done me. My Father, as he was about to leave me, ask'd me whether he ſhould bring my Husband along with him the next Day. I made anſwer that he could not bring him too ſoon; and that if he were in any place near at hand, it would be a kindneſs to let me ſee him preſently. Immediately my Father went to him, for it ſeems they came both together; and within half an hour after, my Father return'd, and brought my Husband along with him. I muſt confeſs that his manner of accoſting me excited my pity: And it was the firſt time I thought I could perceive that he lov'd me. Till then my Eyes had bin bewitch'd, ſo ſtrangely was I prepoſſeſs'd with my Affection for *Bloſſac*. And I was ſenſible of what I had never yet bin ſenſible in his favour. And all this, wanting words, we could only expreſs by our Careſſes and our Tears. For my Father not doubting but that the Reconciliation was ſincere on both ſides, made a long Sermon upon the Obligations that requir'd him to love me, laying all the wrong upon him; ſo well had my Ingenuity perſuaded him that I was in no fault.

I left the Abby, and two days after we drove directly

rectly to my Husband's Caſtle. All People admir'd that I had ſo eaſily recover'd my ſelf from my Tranſports; but no body knew the true Reaſon. I then thought my ſelf happy, and was in hopes, that by my blameleſs Demeanour, and my ſincere Affection for my Husband, I ſhould wean him from his Debaucheries, to which I aſcrib'd his Irregularities and Capricio's.

But I foreſaw not the New Misfortune that threaten'd me; and that I was near a Precipice of more Pernicious Extremities then thoſe from which I had ſo lately eſcap'd.

My Father, who would by no means leave us till he had perfectly reconcil'd us, kept us company, reſolving to ſpend ſome time at the Caſtle. He and my Husband were both a Horſeback, I in a Litter; the uſual Carriage made uſe of for Women of Quality in the Province where we liv'd. Scarce had we rode three Leagues, but we ſaw ſeveral Horſemen come poudring towards us upon the full ſpeed. By and by, as they came near, they drew their Swords; which making us believe that their deſign was upon us, all our Attendants ran away. My Father and my Husband made ſome reſiſtance at firſt; but being over-number'd, were forc'd to yield; and the Litter was conſtrain'd to return the ſame way it came.

For my own part, I was in ſuch a Conſternation, and Fear had ſo diſorder'd my Senſe and Underſtanding, that I never knew *Sauveboeuf*, till he made me a Complement, and told me, that he eſteem'd himſelf moſt happy, to come in ſo ſeaſonably to my Reſcue from the violence of my Huſband. I was about to undeceive *Sauveboeuf*, and let him know, that my Husband and I were reconcil'd, when my Father, who had got looſe, I know

not how, from the Sparks that ſtopt him, came riding up with his Sword in his hand, and threaten'd to kill me. Upon which *Sauveboeuf* not believing it ſafe to truſt me in ſuch rude hands, carri'd me away by force, notwithſtanding all that I could ſay or plead for my ſelf.

Thus by the moſt unexpected Accident that ever was, I found my ſelf as it were torn from the hands of my Husband, at a time when I began to love him; and I became at the ſame time an Innocent Occaſion of new Stories and freſh Calamities to the prejudice of my Reputation, when I was wholly taken up with a deſire to have fix'd my ſelf to my duty.

What a noiſe did this Story make; and what did not People ſay of me in the World! My Father and my Husband made no queſtion, but that it was a Contrivance of mine which had engag'd *Sauveboeuf* to this Act of Violence: And being ſo prepoſſeſs'd, they made no wonder that I ſo readily conſented to my Reconciliation; and after this, my Father no leſs readily believ'd whatever my Husband had told him before. And indeed, Probabilities render'd the Proceeding ſo Criminal, that neither the one nor the other could well excuſe me. And upon this they were ſo incens'd againſt me and *Sauveboeuf*, that without any conſideration of their own Honours and my Reputation, they went to *Bourdeaux*, to make their Complaint to the Parlament.

But they were not a little amaz'd to meet *Sauveboeuf* there, who to juſtify me as I had deſir'd him, had follow'd 'em to that City. However, 'twas in vain for him to lay before 'em, that I had no hand in the Violence: For that was thought to be an Excuſe only to hinder the Proſecution of the Law.

In the mean time Publick Report had ſpread abroad a new Story, by which it was given out, that

that *Sauveboeuf*, having forc'd me from my Friends, only to ſatisfy a tranſitory Paſſion, had left me ſo ſoon as he had humour'd his looſe Deſires.

What a troubleſome thing it is to lie at the mercy of certain Conjunctures! while every body takes the liberty to vent Probabilities for truth; ſo that it may be ſaid that the good or bad Reputation of Women depends upon the Circumſtances of their Adventures.

Beſides that *Sauveboeuf* was well eſteem'd in the Parlament of *Bourdeaux*, and had very powerful Friends, there was another Reaſon which hinder'd my Father and my Husband from proſecuting this Affair. Nor did *Sauveboeuf* ſhun 'em, but waited on 'em himſelf to give 'em an Account of his Conduct; and among other things he told 'em, that the ſame day that he forc'd me from 'em, he carri'd me back to the Nunnery which I left that Morning. Certainly they muſt have bin moſt dreadfully prepoſſeſs'd againſt me, to queſtion my Innocency after that. For, in ſhort, had I lov'd *Sauveboeuf* in ſuch a manner as they ſeem'd to believe, and to that end, had engag'd him to force me out of their hands, moſt aſſuredly I would never have return'd the ſame day to the Convent; I ſhould have doubtleſs choſen ſome other Sanctuary; nor would I ſo ſoon have taken care to juſtify my ſelf.

My Father and my Husband made a ſhew of giving credit to what *Sauveboeuf* told 'em; and ſo, quitting their Proſecutions, perhaps becauſe they thought they ſhould get nothing by 'em, they return'd to me, who ſtay'd all this while in the Convent. But this Viſit was quite different from the former. They both of them diſtruſted me; neither had I thoſe kind thoughts of my Husband as before, while I began to look on *Sauveboeuf* with no indifferent Eye.

Thus

Thus we quitted the Convent a ſecond time: But then I muſt acknowledge, I follow'd my Father and my Husband with as much Reluctancy and Sadneſs, as Chearfulneſs and Joy before this unlucky Adventure.

My Father ſtaid with us a few days; and before he left me, he prepar'd me for all the cold Treatments of my Husband, which in a little time he fail'd not to make me ſenſible of. I did all that lay in my power to remove from my Father's mind all thoſe Suſpicions, which my being forcibly carri'd away had created in him. But he made me anſwer, that nothing but my future behaviour could undeceive him, and that if ever I gave him occaſion to be diſpleas'd with me again, I muſt never expect to find any Protection among my Relations. And thus I became expos'd to greater Misfortunes then thoſe which hitherto had befallen me.

Some time after I found my ſelf to be with Child; and becauſe it pleas'd my Husband to forget that we had bin together near two days when he came the firſt time with my Father to the Convent, he imputed to *Sauveboeuf* what he ought not to have imputed to any but himſelf. Never had Calumny a weaker foundation: For all the World knew, that ſince my firſt acquaintance with *Sauveboeuf*, he had never ſpoken to me but in the preſence of Witneſſes. But whether it were that my Husband reſolv'd to ruin me, or that it was his pleaſure to aſſert an untruth, he openly declar'd that I could not be with Child by him.

Then I foreſaw all the Sorrows that afterwards befel me. I wrote to my Father an Account of my Condition, and of the Injury my Husband did me: But my Father di'd about the ſame time, which redounded ſtill to my diſgrace, and became an addi-

tion

tion to my Misfortune, because his Death was imputed to my having broken his heart. Nor was there any body now left to whom I could repair for Succour, but my Mother, who perfectly hated me; and for fear I should return home, was the first that confirm'd my Husband's Suspicions, and infus'd into him thoughts of shutting me up in a Nunnery.

I shall not say anything how I liv'd after this with my Husband. There is no need that the World should be inform'd of my ill usage, to beget compassion of my Misfortunes. My Condition was sufficient to make People apprehensive that never Woman was more unfortunate.

I also owe so much prudence to the Memory of a Man whose Wife I was, to say nothing of him, more then what I cannot dispence with letting the World know: But certain it is, that I suffer'd whatever Cruelty and Scorn could invent to torment a Woman.

At length, in the midst of that despair to which I was reduc'd; and dreading as well for my self, as the Child in my Womb, all those dismal Consequences which I had reason to fear, once more I thought it my best way to commit my self to the Fortune of a second Flight. This Design of mine I imparted to *Balzac*, who, as I said before, was a near Neighbour of mine, and often came to visit me. He advis'd me to go to *Bourdeaux*, and complain to the Parlament. This, no question, was good Counsel, but my love for *Sauveboeuf* would not let me follow it, and forc'd me to take a bad Resolution. I went to the Marchioness of *R*—— For the vexation of having recourse to a Rivales did not so much prevail with me, as the hopes of obtaining by her Assistance the succour and

protection

protection of a Perſon whom I lov'd: But I never committed a fault in my life, for which I deſerv'd to be more ſeverely rebuk'd, then this. Yet after all, whither muſt a Woman carry her Complaints, when ſhe is altogether void of Succour, and has alſo a prevailing Paſſion in her Heart that blinds her Reaſon.

Sauveboeuf was in *Languedoc*; and the Marchioneſs, as jealous of me as I could poſſibly be of her, found a means to render fruitleſs all the Letters which I wrote to him, either by ſtopping 'em, or by prepoſſeſſing him againſt me. At leaſt this was what I imagin'd; not being able to perſuade my ſelf, that a Man ſhould teſtify ſo great a Paſſion for me, yet never write me back one Anſwer, in ſuch a deplorable Condition as mine.

Thus it was that I was well enough puniſh'd for the choice I had made of the Marchioneſs's Houſe. Not that the Marchioneſs fail'd in any point of Civility toward me; but on the other ſide, did me a thouſand good Offices: But in ſhort, I ſuffer'd my ſelf to be beholding to a Woman who receiv'd Letters every day from *Sauveboeuf*, while I could hear no tydings what was become of him. I found I was too unfortunate to have faithful Friends. But as unfortunate as I was, I found my ſelf vain enough not to digeſt the ſeeing another ſo ſeverely preferr'd before me.

I reſolv'd therefore to quit the Marchioneſs, and that I might conceal the motive of my Reſolution, I faign'd the Receit of Letters from my Mother, who had ſent for me to lye in at *Paris*. She believ'd it; or elſe ſhe diſſembl'd the believing of it: And ſo, though very near my time, I ſet forward in the Road to *Paris*, not knowing where to lodge when I came there: For I never thought that my Mother would ever receive me.

I or-

I order'd therefore two Places to be hir'd in the Publick Coach under another Name; and ſo I departed, attended only by one of my Chamber-maids. Now in regard that none of the Paſſengers knew me, I heard my ſelf frequently talk'd of during the Journey. Nothing made more a noiſe in the Province, then this my ſecond Flight from my Huſband's Houſe. 'Twas all the Diſcourſe of the Strangers in the Coach; and I had more then once an occaſion to be angry at the fooleries which they prattl'd. There was one Man, whom I never ſaw in my life, who averr'd that he was perfectly well acquainted with me, and who not dreaming that he was trifling in my preſence, maintain'd, that it was none of his fault that he had not bin one of my Gallants. He affirm'd, that I had left my Huſband to run after *Sauveboeuf*; and he added to all the reſt a thouſand Abominable Circumſtances. And thus it is that we meet with People every day, who corroborate Scandal by a falſe Honour which they attribute to themſelves; and who, that they may ſeem to be privy to Affairs that make a great noiſe, invent Particulars of which they pretend to underſtand the original Reaſon. I had a mind more then once to have confounded thoſe Calumnies by diſcovering my ſelf: But I thought it much better, without making my ſelf known, to take the Lady's part, of whom ſo much ill was ſpoken.

I was not ignorant that I was become the publick Diſcourſe; but I never imagin'd that Scandal was arriv'd to that height, as I had reaſon to know, to my coſt, by the Things that were diſcours'd of in my own hearing. Which ſhews us, that how much vilifi'd ſoever a Woman may be, ſhe never thinks her ſelf ſo much cri'd down as ſhe is. And therefore it would be very requiſite ſometimes,

times, that they who have given the World an occaſion to cenſure their Conduct, ſhould hear what People ſay of 'em. Perhaps they might make a better advantage of ſuch a piece of Knowledge then I did. For I believing that nothing could be charg'd upon me, to the prejudice of that Fidelity which I ow'd my Husband, whatever they ſaid mov'd me no more, then only to ſtir up within me a ſecret deſire of Revenge. Whereas I ſhould have underſtood, that ſeeing outward Appearances afforded Calumny ſuch fair Handles to lay hold of, I ſhould have bin more circumſpect to have avoided 'em.

The heat wherewith I took the part of thoſe Ladies whom the Publick ſignalizes for Adventures, won me the Friendſhip of a Young Gentlewoman who rode in the Coach with her Husband. They were Perſons, who after they had reſided for ſome time in the Province where the Husband had a very conſiderable Employment, were returning to *Paris*, where they had left their Family. The Huſband was call'd M. *Laval*: And Mademoiſelle *Laval* was a Lady pretty enough to make me believe that ſhe was a little concern'd in my defence of the Women. However, they ſeem'd to live, both of 'em, in perfect agreement, and their Union made me envy their happineſs, and bemoan the Fate of Young Virgins of Quality who are ſacrific'd to Intereſt.

I had ſtill taken my Meaſures, and was ſo near my Time, that I was forc'd to ſtop in a Little Village, within a Day's journey of *Paris*. Mademoiſelle *Laval* would not leave me; but judging by my deportment that I was a Perſon of Quality, deſir'd her Husband that he would let her ſtay with me: And he was ſo complaiſant, as to give her permiſſion.

I was

I was brought to bed of a Boy, who has ſince made me amends for the Misfortunes of his Birth, by his Merit, and the Reputation he has acquir'd. But a Son, who has bin ſo much the more a Sufferer for my ſake, becauſe he never fail'd in his Reſpect and Tenderneſs for a Mother, who too frequently, yet without being guilty, gave him occaſion to complain.

I was three Weeks before I was able to ſit up; and all the while Mademoiſelle never left me; for which I oblig'd her to accept of a Diamond, as a ſmall recompence of her Care. Soon after her Huſband came to viſit us, and ſeeing the Preſent I had made his Wife, he offer'd me his Houſe in *Paris*: A kindneſs which I was willing to accept, till I had ſounded how my Mother ſtood affected toward me.

So ſoon as I came to my Lodging, I ſent her, by my Maid, a Letter, which I had written in ſuch a Stile as I thought moſt prevalent to mollify her Obduracy, giving her an account of my being brought to bed, and of the Reaſons that forc'd me to leave my Husband. But upon reading it, ſhe burſt out into ſuch a heat of Indignation againſt me, as no way became a Parent, nor would ſhe vouchſafe ſo much as to ask where I lodg'd: Neither did my Maid, ſeeing her in ſuch a Chafe, think it proper to tell her. All that the Maid could obtain from her was, that ſhe would receive the Child; and I order'd it to be carri'd to her, with a ſecond Letter, which had no better Succeſs then the former; for ſhe ſtill refus'd to ſee me.

This Severity of my Mother moſt cruelly perplex'd me: And I thought to have appli'd my ſelf to my Relations: But fearing to find them no leſs moroſe and inflexible then ſhe, I reſolv'd to let no

body

body understand who I was but Monsieur *Laval*, and Mademoiselle *Laval*; in hopes thereby to engage 'em to a continuance of their Cares. But it had a contrary Effect. Monsieur *Laval* became jealous. He imagin'd that the Friendship which his Wife had shew'd me, had no other ground then the conformity of our Inclinations. The Stories that had bin told him in the Province, and what he had heard in the Coach, made him believe me to be a Woman that had neither Honour nor Conduct; and thus assuring himself that I was a Person of a lewd Conversation, he bid his Wife give me fair warning to provide me another Lodging, and forbad her to have any farther familiarity with me.

Mademoisel *Laval*, who had still a greater friendship for me when she knew who I was, was at her Wits-end, having receiv'd such absolute and peremptory Orders from her Husband: She told my Maid, and she brought me the News.

These unseasonable Tydings made me very uneasy: Nevertheless I told Madam *Laval*, that it was her Duty to obey her Husband; and I made her a long Sermon upon that Subject, stuft with Admonitions and Lessons, which I had more reason to practise then she. But this is not the first time that we have seen People quick sighted in the Omissions of others, that were always blind in the observance of their own Neglects.

She promis'd me, that whatever Lodgings I took, she would find a way to come and visit me. Thus I left Madam *Laval*'s House, and hir'd a Lodging ready furnish'd; from whence I sent, time after time to my Mother, that whenever she pleas'd to hear me, and be a means that I might have justice done, I would not refuse to return to my Husband. But I was astonish'd, when instead of receiving any

answer

anſwer from my Mother, I underſtood that my Husband was come to *Paris*, that he never ſtirr'd out of her Houſe; and that both of 'em ſpar'd for no coſt to obtain an Order from the King to ſhut me up in a Cloyſter.

Fearing therefore leſt they might accompliſh their Deſign, I reſolv'd to lie conceal'd, till I could meet ſome Perſon, under whoſe Protection I might have juſtice done my Innocence.

In the mean time, my Money was almoſt all gone, and I began to be afraid of Neceſſity and Poverty, which are doubtleſs the ſevereſt of all Puniſhments, when my Maid came to me with a great deal of joy, and told me, that ſhe had met *Bloſſac*, that ſhe had inform'd him where I lay, and that he had promis'd to come and viſit me the ſame day.

Now that which fill'd my Maid with ſo much joy, was her hopes that *Bloſſac* would offer me Money; for ſhe was not ignorant of my Wants; beſides that, a Perſon the leaſt ſcrupulous of any in the World, and would willingly have propounded to me all ſorts of ways to get Money, had ſhe found me diſpos'd to follow her Counſels.

I chid her ſeverely for telling *Bloſſac* where I lodg'd, ſeeing I had reſolv'd never to ſee him more; and at the ſame time, after I had paid my Landlord, I remov'd immediately to another Houſe, letting no body know where I lay, unleſs it were Madam *Laval*; reſolving rather to ſuffer the Indignities of Want, then to be oblig'd to ſo unworthy a Perſon. All the while my Maid us'd all her Art, with a world of Tittle-tattle to vanquiſh my unſeaſonable Pride, as ſhe call'd it, and quoted me a hundred Women of as great Quality as my ſelf, to convince me by their Example, that I was not to refuſe any Relief when I ſtood in need of it. But at the ſame

time Madam *Laval*, who gueſt at my Condition, brought me Forty *Piſtoles*, which ſhe deſir'd me to accept. I perceiv'd ſhe had ſold the Jewel which I gave her; ſo that I refus'd at firſt to receive the Money. But judging by the manner of her preſenting it, that ſhe would think her ſelf highly diſobligʼd if I refusʼd her Offer, I compliʼd with her Kindneſs.

As for my Maid, ſhe endeavourʼd to perſuade me to admit *Bloſſac* to give me a Viſit, though it were but once, and no more; and ſeeing ſhe loſt time in Perſuaſions, ſhe went her ſelf to find him out, and told him doubtleſs where I lodgʼd: for he appearʼd to me like an Apparition, when I leaſt expected him. 'Tis true, my Misfortunes had not alterʼd me in the leaſt; and I was glad that he found me the ſame as he had ſeen me formerly, that I might make him the more ſenſible of the Entertainment I reſolvʼd to give him.

Madam *Laval* was then in the Room, and was a Witneſs of our Converſe. So ſoon as he ſaw me, he bluſhʼd and turnʼd pale almoſt at the ſame time. Preſently, at the firſt view of him, I roſe up, and going towards him, I askʼd him what his Buſineſs was, and deſirʼd him to be gone. Nevertheleſs, he would have put on an Air of Familiarity; but finding ſuch a coldneſs in my Reception, he laid aſide his Gayety, and askʼd me what I had to object againſt him? I anſwerʼd him, that I knew him not; that in truth, I took him formerly for one of my Friends, but that I had bin miſtaken in him. Now becauſe he was conſcious that he had provokʼd me, he told me, that if he did not come to my Aſſiſtance, he had Reaſons for it, which he hopʼd would ſatisfy me, when I heard 'em. But perceiving that I would not heark'n to him, he

drew

drew a Purſe, which he deſir'd me to accept; adding withal, that I might have occaſion for it. I refus'd it; he would have giv'n it my Maid; but I forbid her ſo ſeverely to receive it, that ſhe durſt not diſobey me. *Bloſſac* ſeeing me thus obſtinate, in a kind of fury put up his Purſe into his Pocket, and going out of the Room, in an inſolent manner told me, that the next time I wanted him, I ſhould come after him.

I made Madam *Laval* acquainted with the Reaſons I had to be offended with *Bloſſac*, and ſhe commended me for uſing him as I had done.

She had a Kinſman that liv'd at the *Hoſtel' d' Epernon*, whoſe Name was *Morille*: And one day ſhe took an occaſion to talk to him concerning me, and the Condition I was in. *Morille* was generous and obliging: And for that Reaſon, compaſſionating my Sufferings, he ſpoke of me to the Duke of *Candale*.

The Duke, to whom my Name was not unknown, and who had heard talk of my Adventures, gave *Morille* Orders to wait upon me, and to give Madam *Laval* two hundred *Piſtoles* for my preſent Occaſions. Madam *Laval* was too much my Friend, to conceal from my knowledge that *Morille* acted by the Duke of *Candale*'s Orders: And I was willing to be beholding to the Duke, becauſe I had reaſon to believe, that what he did was only out of Generoſity; of which I was ſo much the more readily convinc'd, becauſe he did not ſeem to have any deſire to ſee me.

I muſt confeſs, I was not a little taken with the Duke's Civilities; and a little thing perhaps would have perſuaded me not to have taken amiſs a Viſit from him. But I underſtood ſoon after, that there was ſomething of Intereſt in his Generoſity. For

ſo ſoon as he underſtood that I had accepted his two hundred *Piſtoles*, he ſent to me that he might be admitted to kiſs my Hand, which I could not well refuſe him. He ſpoke not a word that tended to give me the leaſt intimation of what he had done; and always interrupted me, when he perceiv'd me going about to teſtify my acknowledgment. But though he were ſo diligent to prevent my Acknowledgments of his Generoſity, he affected no leſs to talk of the Paſſion, which as he ſaid, he had for me: And I was bound to hear him, and to believe ſome part of his Diſcourſe.

There was nothing in my heart that oppos'd the Inclination that I had for him, but the neceſſity of being oblig'd to him, under which I labour'd. Thus by an odd effect of Scruple and Delicacy, the ſame things, which having convinc'd me of his Generoſity, had infus'd into me an eſteem and value for him, hinder'd me from reſolving to give him proofs of it. I muſt confeſs, that had I not bin beholding to him, I am apt to think I ſhould have had as great an Affection for him as he proteſted Love for me. But imagining with my ſelf, that it would be ſuſpected my Paſſion was grounded upon Intereſt, I took a Reſolution to reſiſt whatever might ripen an Inclination for him. For this reaſon I anſwer'd him in ſuch a manner as might deprive him of all hope; and I conjur'd him alſo never to ſee me more, till I was in a condition to acknowledge his Bounty.

Book the Third.

BUT the World is ſo perſuaded that Women are altogether govern'd by Intereſt, that the Duke of *Condale* made no queſtion of my having a private Amour ſomewhere elſe. Which made him talk to the Count of *B*—— of my contempt of Intereſt, as of a Novelty newly come into the World. The Count, who was one of thoſe that believ'd there could be no honeſt Woman, told him that he had bin a Cully to his own Generoſity; and offer'd to give him proofs of it. To which purpoſe he reſolv'd to enter into a ſtrict acquaintance with me, as well to undeceive the Duke, as to rank me among his Heroeſſes. But he was miſtaken in his Aims; for he found nothing in the Reception I made him, that was for his purpoſe, to embelliſh his Memoirs withal. After I had refus'd to hearken to a Perſon who had highly oblig'd me, it could not be imagin'd I would be over haſty to flatter the Aſſiduities of one who attempted my Vertue, to make ſport with it.

At firſt he ſent me Letters without any Name; as if my Fortune had depended upon his Conqueſt; and becauſe he wrote better then another, he thought I would be glad to entertain a Correſpondence with ſo witty a Lover. I found his Letters very pretty; but I was not in a Condition to take any delight in reading 'em: And when I ſaw that he perſiſted in writing to me, I not only refus'd to receiv 'em, but burnt thoſe which I

had already receiv'd, in the preſence of Madam *Laval*.

However, the ill fate of thoſe Letters did not diſcourage the Count; and being inform'd of the time and place where I went to Maſs, he made his appearance there ſeveral times; and becauſe I would not be ſeen to take any notice of him, he accoſted me. At what time after he had teſtifi'd to me his extraordinary deſire to be acquainted with me, he talk'd to me of his Letters. I anſwer'd him, that I had never read 'em; that the Buſineſs which detain'd me at *Paris*, would not permit me to loſe ſo much time; and more, that I did not underſtand why he ſhould pretend to ſo much Boldneſs, as to write and talk to a Woman who had no acquaintance with him, nor ever deſir'd to have any. Theſe words put him quite out of order; ſo that he bruſh'd away from me, and went to tell the Duke of *Candale*, that I was not a Woman who had common ſenſe.

The Duke of *Candale* laught at him for his Preſumption, and conceiv'd a greater eſteem for me. Nevertheleſs, he was not ſo eager to pay me his Aſſiduities; but forbore to viſit me, whether it were that he deſpair'd to reape any fruit of his Pains, or that he were naturally impatient.

In the mean time Neceſſity preſs'd harder and harder upon me every day. And though none of my Relations were ignorant of the Wrongs my Huſband and my Mother did me, none of 'em ſent me any relief. 'Tis true, that ſome of 'em were downright with my Mother, and laid before her, how much ſhe was bound in Conſcience to aſſiſt me; but her Hatred ſuppli'd her with Reaſons that ſtopp'd their mouths. And then they cri'd, her Mother knows more then we; there muſt be ſome-

thing

thing in the matter, or elſe a Mother could never be ſo cruel to her own Fleſh and Blood. For it is always a much more eaſy thing to condemn the Unfortunate, then to afford 'em any Succour in their Diſtreſs. Nevertheleſs there was a Lady who took ſome compaſſion upon my deplorable Condition. This Lady was the Dutcheſs of *Chaſtillon*; and tho ſhe were my Mother's Friend, ſhe offer'd me both her Houſe and her Table. But by the unlucky influence of my Stars, all the Dutcheſs's Favours and Bounty became fatal to her Reputation and mine.

The Abbot *Fouquet* was one of her Acquaintance, and gave us frequent Viſits. This Abbot the Dutcheſs would be ſtill obliging to make me Preſents; to which purpoſe ſhe made uſe of a means that put me to no little ſhame. We frequently play'd all three together, and in regard the Abbot never play'd but with a deſign to loſe, I won conſiderably every day. Nevertheleſs, Madam *de Chatillon* not contented with having ſuppli'd me with Money by this means, after ſhe had one day won, at the Fair, a Service of great value, ſhe caus'd it to be ſold, and preſs'd me to accept the Money. But the Abbot, who was deſirous that Madam *de Chatillon* ſhould be beholding to him for it, bought the Plate again the next day, and ſent it her home to her Houſe.

This Piece of Gallantry made a great noiſe; and becauſe few People knew the motive of Charity that induc'd the Dutcheſs to act in that manner, they thought ſhe had ſold the *Service* merely for the ſake of the Money. And as for the Abbot, after this, there was no farther queſtion made of it, but that he was in love with Madam *de Chatillon*, and that I was the Confident privy to the Intreague.

This Scandal ſpread abroad to that degree far and near, that the Dutcheſs was conſtrain'd to remove me from her Houſe. And I parted from her with all the Sorrow, that it was poſſible for me to be ſenſible of, for having innocently given an occaſion to the Injurious Reports that had bin rais'd to the prejudice of her Honour. And they made the ſame interpretation of my Removal, as they had done of her Bounty. For they gave out that I was only ſent away, becauſe ſhe perceiv'd that the Abbot *Fouquet* was in love with me. And indeed he was meditating Secret Deſigns, which I diſcover'd afterwards.

After I left Madam *de Chatillon*, I put my ſelf into a Convent; and three days after the Abbot *Fouquet* brought me a Letter from her, wherein ſhe ſent me word, that notwithſtanding the Reaſons which oblig'd her to refrain my Company, ſhe was ſtill my Friend: That it became me ſeriouſly to think of forcing my Husband and my Mother to do me Reaſon; and to the end I might have more liberty to act then in a Convent, ſhe had given order for a Houſe for me in ſuch a Quarter of the City, where ſhe would take care that I ſhould want for nothing. I really believ'd that this Letter came from Madam *de Chatillon*: And being earneſtly deſirous to put an end to the Diſputes between me and my Husband, I conſented to what ſhe had order'd in my behalf, without any more ado. So that after I had return'd her a thouſand Thanks in a long Letter, I quitted the Convent, and went to the Houſe prepar'd for me, in company with Mrs. *Laval*. For her Husband, who was then in the Province, no longer minded his Wife's coming to ſee me, ſo long as he perceiv'd that I had found Protection and Support.

I found

I found in this Lodging an Apartment very richly and modeſtly furniſh'd, as alſo a Coach with the Cyphers of Madam *de Chatillon*. I admir'd her Generoſity, and often complain'd to her in my Letters, that notwithſtanding I receiv'd ſo many Favours from her Bounty, I had not the liberty to viſit her. For I forgot to let ye know, that when we parted, ſhe told me 'twas not convenient we ſhould viſit one another. I muſt confeſs, I never receiv'd any Anſwers to my Letter; but the Abbot *Fouquet*, who ſtill undertook to deliver 'em, and who frequently came to viſit me, always brought me Compliments and Excuſes in the Dutcheſſes Name. However, in a little time I began to conſider, that the Abbot's Viſits were too frequent: But in regard he ſtill brought me news of Madam *de Chatillon*, and that he ſeem'd to viſit me only upon the account of my Buſineſs, I durſt not deſire him to forbear coming ſo often.

In this manner I liv'd for ſome time, without dreaming in the leaſt that there had bin any foul play in theſe Civilities that were ſhewn; when Mrs. *Laval* one morning enter'd my Chamber, and gave me to underſtand with tears in her Eyes, that the Lodging where I lay, belong'd to the Abbot *Fouquet*, and that it was the Publick Talk of the Town, that he kept me. In a word, That Madam *de Chatillon* was no way concern'd in any of theſe Favours, for which I thought my ſelf wholly beholding to her Liberality.

It is not to be imagin'd how much I was aſtoniſh'd at this News. Methought I ſaw at that very inſtant every thing that I had not the wit to ſee before. I made no doubt but the Things which had bin told me, were true; and I admir'd how I could be ſo palpably cheated. Preſently I flew to

Madam

Madam *de Chatillon*'s Houſe; but ſo ſoon as I appear'd, ſhe came towards me, and loading me with Reproaches, bid me be gone out of doors immediately. This Reception ſeiz'd me with amazement; I fell into a ſwoon, from which they had much ado to recover me: I ask'd in vain to ſpeak with Madam *de Chatillon*, but ſhe refus'd me admittance, and ſent me word again to make haſte out of her Houſe. This Uſage having too ſadly convinc'd me of the truth of what Mrs. *Laval* had told me, I reſolv'd to return no more to that Fatal Houſe; but went directly to the Convent which I left ſome Weeks before: But the Houſe refus'd to admit me: And I found by the Language which they gave me, that I alone was ignorant of the Trick that had bin put upon me.

Mrs. *Laval*, who knew me to be innocent of all this, gave me the beſt comfort that ſhe could; and, I believe, that had it not been for her, I had ſtabb'd my ſelf. She carri'd me to one of her own Friends, where ſhe left me, till ſhe went to fetch away ſuch things as were properly my own; but more eſpecially to ſeek for the Letter wherein M. *de Chatillon* had offer'd me the Lodging. There ſhe met the Abbot *Fouquet* in a heavy toſs to know what was become of me. She told him that I was fallen ill at a Houſe where I intended to have ſpent the Afternoon, and that they had put me to Bed. He really believ'd what ſhe told him to be true, and deſir'd Mrs. *Laval* to be his Guide to the Place where I was; nor could any thing that ſhe could ſay to be rid of him, prevent his coming along with her: Neither indeed was ſhe unwilling that he ſhould ſee me, to the end I might ſchool him for the injury he had done me. But ſo ſoon as I perceiv'd him, my Tears that were but newly ceas'd, burſt

burſt forth again: I had not ſtrength enough to ſpeak a word. So that Mrs. *Laval* beholding me in that Condition, told him the true Reaſon of my Affliction.

But the Abbot with a ſmiling Countenance bid me be of good chear, aſſuring me that nothing had bin done but by Madam *de Chatillon*'s Order: And to prove the falſhood of all thoſe things which had bin told me, he alledg'd the Reſpect which he had always had for me.

I was ſo caſt down by the Troubles and Vexations attending this Adventure, that I liſten'd with delight to the Aſſurances which he gave me, that all was but a falſe Alarum. So true it is, that in overwhelming Misfortunes we lay hold on every Bough to ſave our ſelves. But in ſhort, the Reception which the Dutcheſs of *Chatillon* gave me, no way agreed with the Abbot *Fouquet*'s Oaths: So that without examining any farther, whether it were true or no, I deſir'd him to refrain all manner of Viſits for the future. He obey'd me; ſtill proteſting at his departure, that he had done nothing but what Madam *de Chatillon* had order'd him to do.

So ſoon as he was gone, I immediately ſent away to Madam *de Chatillon* the Letter which had bin the cauſe of ſo many bad Effects. Which Letter the Abbot *Fouquet* had deviſ'd on purpoſe to decoy me into his Lodging, with a deſign to have told me more of his mind when opportunity ſhould aſſiſt him.

However, Madam *de Chatillon* being perſuaded that I had acted by conſent with the Abbot, as yet continu'd to harbour a Conceit that I had contriv'd the Letter in my own juſtification; nor would ſhe begin to do me juſtice, till ſhe ſaw me perſevere in my

my Reſolution never to return to that Lodging again. But afterwards the Abbot himſelf fully undeceiv'd her, by confeſſing that he had counterfeited the Letter, to the end I might be in a Place where I might be more at liberty to look after my Affairs: Adding withal, that he had not made uſe of that Artifice, but only to oblige me to accept of the Lodging.

But the World judg'd otherwiſe of the matter: For it was the publick Diſcourſe, that I had bin engag'd in an Amorous Intriegue with the Abbot, but that being weary of me, he had turn'd me out of his Houſe. And thus I underwent both the Shame and Mortification to be lookt upon as a Miſtreſs abandon'd by her Gallant.

Madam *de Chatillon*, and the Abbot *Fouquet*, endeavour'd in vain to undeceive the Publick. All the Favour which they, who believ'd I left the Houſe by my own Choice, did me, was to ſay, I had not done it, but to avoid the Proſecutions of my Mother and my Husband.

'Tis true, that They, no ſooner both of 'em underſtood that I lodg'd in a Houſe that belong'd to Abbot *Fouquet*, and which he furniſh'd for me at his own Charges, but they preſented a Petition againſt me, and they were juſt upon the point of obtaining leave to ſeize me when I left thoſe Lodgings. I had notice of it, and I thought it my beſt way to conceal my ſelf. For I ſuppoſe that no body would have advis'd me to have deliver'd my ſelf up to the Hatred of a Mother, and the Jealouſy of an Enrag'd Husband.

So ſoon as Madam *de Chatillon* was fully convinc'd of my Innocence, ſhe employ'd all her Credit and Friends in my behalf; and ſhe had enow to procure me an Injunction to ſtop all farther Proſecutions

ſecutions againſt me. By this means ſhe ſet me at liberty to appear and ſollicit a legal Separation from my Husband. She recommended me to a Magiſtrate who promis'd to aſſiſt me, and who took upon himſelf the management of my Buſineſs. I had alſo a yearly maintenance of a Thouſand Crowns allow'd me by Decree, which ſecur'd me from the Gripes of Want; all which I ſhould have done at my firſt coming to *Paris*. But though I could have ſpar'd for no pains, how could I ever hope to have brought it to paſs, when I had neither Protection nor Friends?

The Magiſtrate with whom Madam *de Chatillon* had brought me acquainted, provided me a Lodging in the Houſe of one of his Kinſwomen; where he came to me every day, and gave me an account of what he did for me. So that I bleſt my ſelf that I had got for my Friend a Perſon whoſe Zeal appear'd ſo fervent. Therefore it was that I wholly reli'd upon him for the management of my Affairs; and gave my ſelf up to enjoy the Repoſe which I had bin ſo long depriv'd of.

But this Magiſtrate had another aim; for he inſenſibly gave me an occaſion to diſcover that my Perſon was no way diſpleaſing to him; nor was I at all alarum'd at his good Opinion. On the other ſide, I was extreamly glad of it; imagining that his Zeal being enliven'd by Love, my Buſineſs could not go amiſs.

He had a proper handſome Son already in the King's Service, and who went by the Name and Title of Marquiſs of St. *Albe*: He was brisk, polite, and witty; he came frequently to his Kinſwoman's Houſe, where he had a ſight of me, and ſoon became his Father's Rival.

The method of Courtſhip which theſe two Lovers took was very different. The Son always reſpectful, durſt not open his Lips to ſpeak of his Paſſion: The Father emboldened by the Services he did me, never ſcrupl'd to diſcover his love to me. I then began to repent of delivering up into his Hands the whole management of my Suit; but 'twas now too late. He was become maſter of it; and I could not be without him.

I therefore lent him a patient Ear, and heard with moderation a Language which my Misfortunes had render'd odious to me; and I forbore all manner of Ralliery to a Perſon, whom it became me to be careful of diſpleaſing. Nor could I put him quite out of hopes, for fear of exaſperating him againſt my Intereſts; believing that by keeping him in ſuſpence, I ſhould engage him to ſerve me: But this Conduct of mine produc'd a contrary effect. He perſuaded himſelf, that ſince I heard him with ſo much calmneſs, I had an inclination for him; and with theſe thoughts he redoubl'd his Aſſiduities, and preſs'd me to declare my ſelf. I muſt confeſs, that till then, I ſaw no great harm in his Addreſſes, which were rather a diverſion to me. But now I began to dread the Conſequences of ſuch an Amour. And indeed, conſidering theſe new attacks upon my Reputation, I had reaſon to be of this opinion, That whatever good Intentions a Woman might have, it was always dangerous to her Honour to ſuffer her ſelf to be belov'd.

His Sollicitations became ſo earneſt, and his Importunities ſo preſſing, that I knew not what courſe to take, that I might be rid of him. My firſt thoughts prompted me to let him plainly underſtand the vanity of his Hopes: But then conſidering he was a Perſon I ſtood in need of, I alter'd my mind,

mind, and took a Reſolution, which in truth I ought not to have taken. For I made him believe I was not inſenſible of his love, and conſtrain'd my ſelf to ſuffer it with ſome compliance. This way of proceeding augmented his fooliſh Hopes, and within a few days after he had the boldneſs to let me underſtand as much. Had I not bin reſtrain'd by Honour and my Duty, yet my averſion for him would have preſerv'd me from offending: For the Extremities wherewith I was threaten'd, ſeem'd to me leſs ſevere then the Compliance which he demanded. So that I gave him all the Ill Language that Anger and Contempt could inſpire into my thoughts, and deſir'd him to meddle no more with my Buſineſs. And to the end I might wholly diſingage my ſelf from him, and deprive him of all opportunities of ſeeing me, I was preparing to leave his Kinſwoman's Houſe; when a new Accident befel me.

The Young Marquiſs of St. *Albe* was belov'd by a Damſel that waited upon his Mother; I know not what paſs'd between 'em; but this Maid perceiving that her Lover began to neglect her ſince his acquaintance with me, ſhe reſolv'd to watch him. Now it happen'd one day that ſhe found a moſt tender and paſſionate Letter which he had written, with a deſign perhaps to have put it into my hands. However it were, the Maid ne're queſtion'd but that it was intended for me; and to puniſh me for having got her Lover away from her, in the height of her malice ſhe reſolv'd to anſwer it in my name; wherein ſhe made me write whatever was proper to make the World believe that I lov'd *St. Albe* as much as I was belov'd by him. And to ſuppreſs all proof of the falſhood of the Letter, which was none of my Hand, ſhe gave it out that I had reaſons for what I did. This was but a ſhal-

low

low Contrivance: However, it pass'd among those who only sought to put me to trouble.

The Maid, who made use of this Stratagem, was not ignorant of my being belov'd by the Father of her Galant, because she was her Mistress's Confident, who being naturally of a jealous humour, had the Curiosity to have her Husband watch'd; and you may be sure she was nothing sorry to have an opportunity to plague him. She therefore jeer'd him every day with his affection for me; and to let him see how unfortunate he was in his Courtships, she shew'd him the Letter which his Son had written to me, and my pretended Answer to it. The Father, who was already jealous of his Son, was fully convinc'd of the truth of his Amour when he read those Letters. He never troubl'd himself to examine a Story that was so sillily contriv'd; but overjoy'd that he had got proofs of the secret correspondence between me and his Son, he resolv'd to observe no measures of civility with mee, and flew out into a most violent Rage against his Son. In vain his Friends persuaded him to more mild and gentle Sentiments. This unnatural Father, who by his Credit, and his Office, had Authority enough to bring about his unjust Designs, threw his Son into Prison, never considering the indignity of such usage. For in short, *St. Albe* was already an Officer, had Courage, and was well esteem'd in his Regiment. Nor was he content with punishing *St. Albe*; but comes to me on purpose to affront me. He upbraided me with debauching his Son, and let go a Torrent of Injurious Language, and as he went out, told me that I deserv'd no less to be sent to some House of Confinement.

I thought

I thought at first that he himself had counterfeited those Letters on purpose to pick a quarrel with me: Afterwards I accus'd his Son to have bin the Author of 'em; believing, that in imitation of some Young Sparks, he might have fram'd 'em, to give himself the Reputation of a *Fortunate Gentleman*. I was labouring under the violence of these various Agitations, when the Magistrate return'd to me again. It seems he had consider'd that I had said nothing in my own vindication; and therefore it was probable he would have heard what I could say for my self. But I receiv'd him with all the disdain imaginable. But I scorn'd to undeceive him about the Letters, so extravagant he seem'd to me in his Behaviour. I only bid him be gone, and trouble me no more with his Impertinences. The next day the Maid, who had bin the cause of all this Disorder, seeing *St. Albe* in Prison, mov'd with the misfortune of her Lover, came to me and confess'd what she had done: And upon her promise to confirm her Confession to me before his Father, I sent for him again. Nor was he long absent; verily believing that I had sent for him back to make my peace with him. He heard the Maid's Recantation; but he would not believe her; at least he counterfeited Incredulity. He ask'd me, in derision, how much I had given her to make that Confession; farther adding, that he was no Fool to be put upon by my little Artifices

When the Maid was gone, and he saw me alone, he told me, there was but one way to prevent the noise that he was going to make in the World; that he needed not to interpret what he meant; for that I knew well enough what it was he desir'd. 'Twas in vain to tell him, that the course he took to gain my Love, was the only way to make me hate him. He continu'd obstinate in his impertinent

nent Pretenſions; telling me, that men of the Long Robe were not Perſons that us'd to be foil'd in their Undertakings. In ſhort, he forc'd me by his inſolent Language, to return him as bad; to which he repli'd with Menaces and Reproaches, ſwearing as he went out, to acquaint my Mother and my Huſband with my Irregular Actions.

I went immediately to give the Dutcheſs of *Chatillon* an account of every thing that had paſt. She ſpoke to the Magiſtrate, and with a great deal ado obtain'd ſo much favour from him, as to promiſe her that he would make no noiſe, nor ſhew my Mother the Letter which he had in his cuſtody. However, the Villain told the Dutcheſs ſo many plauſible Stories concerning my pretended Intriegue with his Son, that ſhe firmly believ'd him; ſo that I was forc'd to endure the Sermons that ſhe preach'd to me upon Folly and Indiſcretion. 'Twas in vain to aſſure her that the Magiſtrate was a wicked Fellow, and that I reſolv'd to ſtay no longer in his Kinſwoman's Houſe. She lay'd before me the need I had of him, and ſcar'd me with the fear of his Revenge. I found my ſelf then reduc'd to a neceſſity of diſſembling; ſo that we patch'd up a Reconciliation, upon condition that he ſhould ſpeak to me no more of his Paſſion. He promis'd me ſo to do, though reſolv'd not to keep his word, and more obſtinate then ever to make an ill uſe of the need I had of him.

In the mean time, the Unfortunate *St. Albe* took a reſolution to write to me, and begg'd of me that I would endeavour to procure his Liberty. Mov'd therefore with his Sufferings, and forgetting the juſt Reaſons I had to refrain from medling in his Buſineſs, I liſten'd to my Compaſſion. I ſent imprudently to his Mother the Letter which he had written to me, and wherein he made me a lively deſcription

ſcription of his Ill uſage. I made no queſtion but that her heart would have bin mollifi'd with reading it; but ſhe was more jealous then compaſſionate, and preferr'd her deſire to embroil me again with her Husband, before the care of delivering her Son from his oppreſſion. She ſhew'd her Son's Letter to her Husband; which prov'd the cauſe of a new Prejudice againſt me. For the Father reaſſum'd his firſt Fury, and ſwore he would ruin me, if I did not ſhun his Revenge by ſatisfying his Paſſion. I likewiſe acquainted Madam *de Chatillon* with this Accident, who blam'd me for receiving and ſhowing *St. Albe*'s Letter; and told me I muſt get out of this Labyrinth as well as I could.

Now then to get rid of the Magiſtrate, a certain Stratagem came into my head that brought me into new trouble. I made a ſhew of ſurrendring to his Importunities, and I promis'd him a meeting the next day at a Place appointed. But I went the very ſame day to his Wife, and made her acquainted with her Husband's Follies, and the meeting wherewith I had flatter'd his Hopes. I thought it might be permitted me, conſidering my Circumſtances, to take this Courſe, ſeeing that his Wife had let looſe all her fury againſt me; and gave out that I had as much kindneſs for her Husband, as indeed I had a real averſion for him.

I thought, to the end I might undeceive her, that it would be my beſt way to inform her of what paſs'd between us; which I did, withal deſiring her to give our meeting an interruption, and affording her all the opportunities of doing it.

This Woman, who imagin'd that this was not the firſt meeting I had given her Husband, thought at firſt I had entruſted her with a falſe Secret; but at length ſhe was convinc'd of my Sincerity. She

thank'd me then for the Advice I had given her, and assur'd me she would do what I desir'd. But her misinanagement of the Affair turn'd the innocent means which I made choice of to disincumber my self from my Persecutors, to my prejudice.

I was hardly arriv'd at the Place appointed for my meeting the Magistrate, but she appear'd, bringing along with her two other Relations, who were to be Witnesses of this Adventure.

This Scene would have been a diversion to me, had I not thought, that they who were to be Testimonies of her Husband's Shame, might be likewise Witnesses against my self; and that it was impossible but that an Affair that would be known to so many People, must expose my Reputation after a most cruel manner. The Wife also, who would have it thought that this was not the first time her Husband had broke his Conjugal Covenant, instead of informing her Witnesses that I had acquainted her with the Assignation, told 'em quite the contrary, and bestow'd upon me a liberal share of the bad Language which she gave him. The Husband all in confusion sneak'd out of the Room without speaking a word: At what time I thought the least thing the Wife could have done would have bin to have given a fair Testimony of my Innocency to the People whom she brought along with her. But she was as wicked in her Generation, as her Husband was in his; for she upbraided me before their faces with debauching her Husband. This Adventure presently took wing, and the Publick that already had a prejudice against me, made no scruple to believe me engag'd in a real Intriegue with the Magistrate. However, I did what I could to undeceive the two Kinsmen; and they listen'd to me, believ'd me, and offer'd me their Protection.

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The Husband, who had not the leaſt ſuſpicion of my informing the Wife of the Rendevouze, came to ſee me the next day. But then I told him, I durſt not be ſeen with him any more; conjuring him in the midſt of thoſe Extremities to which he had reduc'd me, to let me underſtand the condition of my Affairs, ſince I could not in honour employ him any longer. He bid me not to trouble my ſelf; for he would ſerve me to the end; that the Adventure the day before was a trifle; and that his Wife was a kind of Beldame, to whom no body gave credit. Then he renew'd his Importunities to anſwer his Deſires: But he no longer talk'd like a Maſter; nor was I any more afraid of him. Of all this I gave a faithful Account to Madam *de Chatillon*, who order'd me to leave my Lodging with the Magiſtrate's Kinſwoman, and fell out with the Magiſtrate himſelf in ſuch a manner, that ſhe would never ſuffer him to come near her more.

But underſtanding after this, that his Wife had never ſurpriz'd him at the Aſſignation, but by the Information that I gave her, he would not let go his hold, reſolving to ruin me, or vanquiſh my Reluctancy.

In the mean time *St. Albe* found a way to break Priſon; upon which his Father, who was extreamly troubl'd at it, and knew not what was become of him, came to acquaint me with it; and talk'd to me as if I had had a hand in his Eſcape; and it was true that it was ſo reported abroad in the World. For his Father gave out theſe Reports to ſcare me, in hopes to overcome me by dint of Defamation; perſuaded that I would at length take off my Mask, when I ſaw my ſelf loſt in my Reputation. And this was the only hope wherewith he flatter'd his Paſſion for me. But the more he ſtrove to defame

me, the leſs occaſion I thought I had given, and the greater was my comfort to find my ſelf innocent: For God had giv'n me the grace to look ſo many Misfortunes in the face, without loſing my Reaſon. I defended my ſelf from the Accuſation of having contributed to *St. Albe*'s Eſcape, and juſtifi'd my ſelf with ſo much the leſs trouble, becauſe I was ignorant of the means he had made uſe of.

And now the Father reſolv'd to make his laſt Effort for obtaining what he had bin ſo long deſiring with ſo much importunity. To this purpoſe he came to give me notice that my Husband was juſt upon the point of obtaining a Sentence in his Suit that would be nothing for my advantage; but that he alone had a Trick to delay Judgment, and that he would aſſiſt me in ſuch a manner, that I ſhould gain my Cauſe, if I would hearken to his Suit. I anſwer'd with diſdain, that I would with patience wait the end of my Buſineſs; and that how unhappy ſoever my Deſtiny were, I would rather chuſe to be unfortunate, then purchaſe my Repoſe by ſo foul a Crime.

The Lodging where Madam *de Chatillon* had plac'd me, when I left the Magiſtrate's Kinſwoman, was a Houſe which had ſeveral Lodgers that were not acquainted one with another. I had the firſt Apartment, and I had no converſe with any of the People that lodg'd in the Houſe. As for Mrs. *Laval*, ſhe liv'd with her Husband, who was return'd from his Province; 'Tis true, that ſhe frequently viſited me, and that was all the comfort I had. At the ſame time alſo I hir'd the Maid again that I brought with me from my Husband's Houſe, and who left me when I went to live with Madam *de Chatillon*. I muſt confeſs, 'tis a pernicious thing to the Reputation of a Young Woman, to keep Servants ſo full

of

of Mercury as ſhe was. And it ſhould be the firſt care of a Perſon of my Sex to avoid entertaining in their Service wild and diſorderly Wantons, and never to be too familiar with Servants, how modeſt and regular ſoever.

This Maid had many ill Qualities, as will appear by the ſequel of the Story. Nor had ſhe ever ſeen *St. Albe*, which was the occaſion of an Adventure which may ſeem fabulous, but which fell out as I am going to relate it.

My Maid having frequently heard how eagerly the Magiſtrate perſecuted me with his impertinent Courtſhip, contriv'd an Enterprize which ſhe never imparted to me.

She had already got acquaintance with the People of the Houſe; and one day ſhe told me, that there was a very pretty Lady among the reſt of the Lodgers who every day very diligently enquir'd after my health; and manifeſted an earneſt deſire to be acquainted with me. I bid her be ſure not to bring her to me; for that I reſolv'd to have no converſe with Perſons that I knew not, having reaſon to be afraid of every body, in the Condition I was in. Nevertheleſs my Curioſity led me one day to take a view of her from my Window. 'Tis true, I had not time to examine her well: However, I obſerv'd ſomething in her Countenance which methought was not unknown to me; but I could not remember where I had ſeen her.

All this while my Maid had lai'd a Deſign in her head, which ſhe reſolv'd to put in execution, while I ſpent the Afternoon with Mrs. *Laval*. She went to the Magiſtrate's Houſe, and after ſhe had ask'd to ſpeak with him in private, ſhe told him, that my unkind uſage of him was only to try his Conſtancy: And moreover, that it was no wonder that I had

ſo ſcornfully rejected him, ſince he never made me any Preſent: That Women were byaſs'd by Intereſt; aſſuring him that his Courtſhips would be acceptable to me, provided he would be but liberal. In ſhort, That if he deſir'd that I ſhould comply with his Addreſſes, he had no more to do, but to come the ſame day to my Lodging. The Magiſtrate promis'd not only not to fail, but to bring Money along with him. The Maid, having thus taken her leave, went to the Young Gentlewoman before mention'd, and propos'd to her that ſhe would be pleas'd to admit, under my Name, and in my Habit, the Viſit of a certain Gentleman, whoſe company was very diverting to me; telling her withal, that if ſhe would do me that kindneſs, I ſhould look upon it as an infinite Obligation. The Lady made ſome Scruples at firſt, but at length accepted the Propoſal. She ſuffer'd 'em to dreſs her in one of my Habits; but ſtill while ſhe was dreſſing, ſhe would ſtill be laughing, as if ſhe had found a Mare's Neſt. She demanded alſo the Name of the Man that was to come; but the Maid gave her a wrong Name, which really ſatisfi'd the Gentlewoman, to do whatever they deſir'd of her, but ſtill laughing, and telling him that ſhe was never cut out for an Actreſs.

Soon after the Old Fornicator of a Magiſtrate arriv'd; at what time the Maid going to meet him, and taking him aſide, gave him to underſtand, that before he was to be introduc'd into the Apartment where I was, I deſir'd him not to meddle with the Window Shutters, but to let 'em be as they were; adding withal, that I had order'd her to take the Money, becauſe it was beneath her to ask for it. Preſently he put a Purſe into my Maid's hand, and enter'd my Apartment with all the Joy, which the

hopes

hopes of a Bleſſing, from which he thought himſelf not far remote, could inſpire into him. At the ſame time there was ſo little light in the Chamber, as would hardly admit the diſtinction of Objects. However, he could perceive a Young Perſon, that ſeem'd to him to be very handſome; and being ſo prepoſſeſs'd as he was with the Idea of his Pleaſure, he never ſuſpected in the leaſt any Trick to be put upon him. He accoſted the Lady; but finding her as mute as a Fiſh, and that he could not get one word out of her Mouth, he began to diſtruſt his Good Fortune: But though ſhe would not ſpeak, as buſy as he was about her, he thought he heard her laugh: Upon which he ſtept to the Windows to let in the Light; but while he was fumbling about the Shutters, the Lady having open'd the Chamber-door, was going to fly for't. Which the Lawyer perceiving, more nimble then ſhe, laid hold of her; but ſeeing her Face ſtood motionleſs, as if he had ſeen a *Meduſa*'s Head; while the Lady wreſts her ſelf out of his Hands, and ran up into her own Apartment.

Down came the Magiſtrate, and having got his People about him, up ſtairs he went again, and demanded his Son to be deliver'd into his hands; his Son, who lay conceal'd in the Houſe in Womens Habit.

All this while my Maid thought verily that the Magiſtrate had bin ſtark ſtaring mad; for ſhe was utterly ignorant that the Lady, whom ſhe had got to act my part, was the Unfortunate *St. Albe*. For it ſeems that after he had eſcap'd from the Place where his Father had impriſon'd him, he had diſguis'd himſelf in Womens Habit, and was come to lodge in the ſame Houſe where I lay, in hopes that being thus ſecur'd from the Perſecutions of his Father,

ther, he might meet with an opportunity to offer me his Service.

The Magiſtrate having caus'd the Chamber-door to be broken open, *St. Albe* was deliver'd into his hands in the ſame diſguize he had on; that is to ſay, in my Cloaths. What a dreadful Accident was this for me! Though an Angel ſhould have deſcended from Heav'n to have born witneſs of my Innocence, he would not have bin believ'd. 'Twas known that *St. Albe* had a love for me; and he was found lodg'd in the Houſe where I lay, diſguis'd in Female Habit, and in Cloaths that belong'd to my ſelf. Could any body believe otherwiſe, but that all this was done by Conſent. What a folly was it in *St. Albe*, ſince he had taken a Reſolution to lye at my Lodging, that he did not ſooner make himſelf known? or at leaſt that he did not refuſe to comply with what was deſir'd of him? But he never dreamt of his Father's coming, eſpecially after the Maid had giv'n him a wrong Name: Beſides, that his Love made him look upon the man, for whom the Cheat was intended, as a Rival, upon whom he was willing enough to revenge himſelf.

During this Hurly-burly at my Lodging, I expected my Maid, whom I order'd to come to me. But being quite tir'd with ſtaying for her, I deſir'd Mrs. *Laval* to accompany me to my Lodging. When I came there, the Neighbours told me the whole Story of this Adventure; and my Maid not coming, I thought her afraid to ſee my face.

They who heard this Story, made no queſtion but that it was a Contrivance of mine. They thought it had bin a Device of mine to make ſport with the Magiſtrate; and gave it out, that I had done it after a very facetious manner; but at the

ſame

ſame time, they ſhrewdly ſuſpected that *St. Albe* and I were agreed together; and thence inferr'd that I was an ill Woman for betraying him in that manner to his Father. In ſhort, They thought me to be of the Humour of thoſe Amorous Dames, who care not what becomes of their Lovers, ſo they may but ſatisfy their Revenge, or their Divertiſement.

However, the Conſequences of this Affair were not ſo pernicious to me as I imagin'd. The Magiſtrate was advis'd not to make any noiſe, becauſe he could not do it, without making himſelf a Laughing-ſtock to the whole Town: And therefore he only gave out, that underſtanding his Son lay diſguis'd in the Houſe where I lodg'd, he only went to fetch him thence.

By this means I found my ſelf deliver'd from a hateful and importunate Lover. He had no mind to make love any more to a Woman that knew how to play ſuch Tricks as thoſe. So that he only hated me from the bottom of his heart; and the weight of his fury fell upon his Son, whom he caus'd to be more cloſely confind.

All this while my Suit remain'd in the ſame condition ſtill; for the Magiſtrate did nothing for me; and Madam *de Chatillon*'s Intereſt ſo far prevail'd, that neither my Mother nor my Husband could get any ground upon me. She had ſo order'd the matter, that none of the moſt famous Advocates would meddle with the Cauſe; but ſtill anſwer'd my Adverſaries when they came to entertain 'em, that it was a Cauſe no way proper for the Bar; but rather to be ended by a Friendly Accommodation: But becauſe we could not agree upon the Conditions, there was nothing done on either ſide. However, I ſtill enjoy'd my Allowance without ſeeing either Husband or Mother; though 'tis true, that

I took

I took all the care I could to avoid their Company.

What was become of my Maid all this while, I knew not; nor was I at all sorry to be so rid of her, till I heard how ill a use she made of her Absence to my prejudice: For in all Places where she came, she would be always bespattering my Reputation. And I will tell ye one Adventure, by which you will fully understand the Character of this same wicked Baggage.

She then perceiving that nothing made the Magistrate so mad as to be impos'd upon by one of his own Sex, made sure of a handsome young Female, and persuaded her to take my Name upon her. And thus it was, that she offer'd me to several Young Sparks at the Court, as a Woman whom necessity had reduc'd to seek her Subsistence by this way of living. Among the rest, she addres's'd her self to *Blossac*, and told him, that I had bin a slave to my Reputation, which was the only Reason that made me refuse the offer of his Purse; but that I would not be so haughty, when I thought my self secure from being known; and provided he had so much discretion as to make a show of being a Stranger to me, that he might assure himself of success. Now in regard that *Blossac* had never done me the honour to have any great respect for me, he readily gave credit to the Wenches fair Story; and desirous to revenge himself of the Inconstancies which he laid to my charge, he accepted the Proposal, with a design to insult over me. This was doubtless his Intention, because he told the Maid that he would bring some of his Friends along with him, when he gave me the meeting; resolving they should be Sharers with him in his good Fortune. *Blossac* therefore told his Friend of it, and his Friend told another,

another, and ſo it ſpread inſenſibly all over the Town.

The Duke of *Candale*, whom I ſometimes met at Madam *de Chatillon*'s, was aſtoniſh'd at the Reports that were ſpread about concerning me, and was ſo civil as to believe 'em falſe. He alſo inform'd Mrs. *Laval* of what he heard, who beſought him to let her know his Authors; and he confeſs'd ingenuouſly that *Bloſſac* was his Intelligencer.

In a word, *Bloſſac* had given the Duke an account of the Diſcourſe between him and my Maid; and having alſo told the Place and Day appointed for the Meeting, the Duke knew not what to think of it; but being deſirous to be convinc'd of the truth, he requeſted *Bloſſac* that he might accompany him to the Aſſignation.

Mrs. *Laval* acquainted me with what the Duke of *Candale* had diſcover'd to her; nor did we know to whom to impute a Story ſo extravagant. I confeſs the firſt motions of my Imagination accus'd my Mother and my Husband, whom I ſaw perſiſting ſtill ſo obſtinately in their Reſolutions to ruin me. But all this while there was nothing of certainty in Surmiſes.

In the midſt of theſe Perplexities Mrs. *Laval* and I were debating which way to put a ſtop to theſe violent Calumnies, when word was brought me that the Duke of *Candale* deſir'd to ſpeak with me. I was glad of the opportunity, in hopes that he might give me ſome light into theſe Myſteries. He enter'd: But ſeeing that he only talk'd to me of general Matters, I interrupted him, and ask'd him the meaning of the many Reports that ſo terribly attackt my Reputation, and of which he had alreary bin talking to Mrs. *Laval*. Then he up and told me what had paſs'd between him and *Bloſſac*, with a farther

farther Account of what had paſs'd between *Bloſſac* and my Maid. Adding, with a ſmile, that he came to ſee whether I was at home or no; becauſe he had bin told I was to have bin at another Place; and that *Bloſſac* ſtay'd for him to carry him to the Meeting. At length he concluded, that he would ſtill make a ſhow of believing as they did, that he would meet *Bloſſac*, and go along with him, and that he would ſend me word who they were that made uſe of my Name.

I was overjoy'd to become Miſtreſs of the means that would ſo ſuddenly enlighten me into theſe dark Secrets that had ſo much diſturb'd my Reſt: And I begg'd of the Duke of *Candale* to give me all the cleareſt Informations he could, that ſo I might cauſe *Bloſſac* to be ſurpriz'd in company with the Perſon that had aſſum'd my Name. I told him of what importance it was to my Reputation, that this Affair ſhould be made clearly out, and conjur'd the Duke to do me juſtice. He promis'd me; but he told me withal, that it would be much more for my Honour that my Husband ſhould ſurprize *Bloſſac*; becauſe it could not be thought but that he knew of the Reports as well as others; that he would go immediately and give him notice that I had given *Bloſſac* a meeting, and that it would be no body's fault but his own if he did not ſurprize me. I approv'd the Duke of *Candale*'s Deſign; and ſo leaving to him the management of all things, I took my leave of him with as much joy, as I was overwhelm'd before with ſadneſs and amazement.

The Duke of *Candale* ſo well order'd his Buſineſs, that my Husband and my Mother had notice of the Aſſignation before he met *Bloſſac*. And the People whom he employ'd to carry 'em the News, would not let 'em be at reſt, but peal'd it in their

Ears

Ears, that there was no time to be loſt: Though indeed they wanted no Spurs, as believing that this Adventure would put an end to their Proceſs; and therefore they reſolv'd not to let me eſcape 'em this bout.

In the mean time the Duke of *Candale* returning to *Bloſſac*, told him, that an Accident had fallen out, ſo that he could not poſſibly go along with him. *Bloſſac* therefore ſeeing no other remedy, went all alone to the Place appointed, while the Duke follow'd him at a diſtance, and kept himſelf conceal'd in the Neighbourhood, reſolving to be a Witneſs of what happen'd. As for my Mother and my Husband, they were ſo indiſcreet as to tell all the World that now they had me ſafe: So that the noiſe of their Deſign ran like Wildfire from one end of the Town to the other; inſomuch that they were attended by a Train of ſeveral Perſons, that laught in their Sleeves to think they were going to be the Spectators of a ſtrange Sight; that is to ſay, of a Husband, who was going, as he thought, to convince himſelf of being a Cuckold.

Bloſſac was met by my Maid, and he was hardly enter'd the Room where the miſtaken Gentlewoman ſtay'd for him, but my Mother and my Huſband, with all their Troop, were cloſe at his heels. Upon the noiſe they made, out came my Damſel: She was known, and when they ſaw her, they made no queſtion I was not far off. Preſently the Doors were forc'd open; but then, to tell ye who lookt moſt like a Changeling of the Two, when they ſaw themſelves both miſtaken, would be too hard a Task for me to undertake; 'tis only for you to imagine. My Mother dropt out firſt, my Husband ſneak'd out after her, and *Bloſſac* follow'd him, looking all like People upon the News of a great

Loſs

Loſs at Sea. So ſoon as they were gone, the Duke of *Candale* arriv'd, and gave order for ſeizing my Maid and her Coadjutrix; and after he had given farther order that they might be ſecur'd, he made haſte to my Lodging to acquaint me with the iſſue of the Adventure.

I was in hopes this diſappointment my Husband had met with, would have bin a ſufficient Proof of my Innocency, and of the little ground he had for all his Suſpicions and Surmiſes; and I lookt upon this Adventure as a finiſhing Stroke, that would have put an end to all my Misfortunes. But People made another interpretation of it. They cri'd, that all this was but a Trick of my own nimble Wit; and that my Maid, by agreement with *Bloſſac* and I, had drawn my Husband and my Mother into this Snare, to make it ſerviceable toward the gaining of my Cauſe. In ſhort, the leſs reaſon they had to believe I had a ſhare in it, the more convinc'd they were of my having a hand in it, and the better they judg'd it carri'd on: Every body laught that heard of it, and I only, by it, reap'd the Applauſe of being a Woman of Wit and Addreſs. But that was not the commendation that I ſought: I deſir'd only that I might have my due. But 'tis impoſſible when a Woman is engag'd in Concernments that will admit of two Interpretations, to avoid the worſt, and enjoy a happy Reputation; 'tis not enough for a Perſon of my Sex to govern her ſelf according to the Rules of Wiſdom and good Conduct; there muſt be nothing that will cary two Senſes in the Accidents of her Life: A Woman muſt needs be always guilty, when Innocence has need of ſo many Juſtifications. Happy thoſe Women who are not expos'd to itheſe Inconveniences. A ſmooth even way of living is the only thing in the World which they

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ought moſt of all to deſire; and they ought to accuſtom themſelves betimes to look upon Intriegues and Adventures as the Rocks of their Repoſe and Honour. I my ſelf confirm'd the Tour which was given to this Story, by my compaſſion upon the two Confederates in Cuſtody. For being perſuaded that I had no more need of Proof to juſtify my Innocence, I thought 'em Objects of my Pity; nor could I endure to hear of the Puniſhments that were threaten'd to be inflicted upon a Maid that had ſerv'd me: So I order'd her to be ſet at liberty, together with her Accomplice. I muſt confeſs, I could not have committed a greater Act of Imprudence, and never was Compaſſion more unſeaſonable. For then, with much more reaſon then before, it was adjudg'd that the Maid had acted by my Orders, when it was known that I was the occaſion of her Releaſe.

I adviſe no body therefore to do as I did: This Creature became ſo forgetful of my goodneſs towards her, that ſhe was afterwards always the firſt to raiſe and ſpread about the Town a hunderd ridiculous Stories of me. A Woman who has Servants that expoſe her Reputation, ought to cauſe 'em to be puniſh'd without mercy.

My Husband about the ſame time return'd into his Province; whether it were that he could not brook the ſhame of his laſt Adventure, or that he thought his abſence requiſite to make me hearken to an Accommodation; for he began to be a weary of lying alone; and ſince I had found Money and Friends, my Mother, who could not endure the ſight of me in *Paris*, had perſuaded him, that it was for his Intereſt to be reconcil'd, and live with me.

For my own part, I could not take a better Reſolution then to conſent to ſuch a Reconciliation, had it bin only to turn the laſt Story to my advantage. The World would doubtleſs have more eaſily believ'd that I had no hand in it, had I immediately after return'd to my Husband. Well then, he ſent a Gentleman to me, one of his Friends, whoſe Name was *Montalzac*, with Orders to make me very fair Propoſitions, if I would forget what was paſt. Nor did he only entruſt that Gentleman with this Negociation, he alſo employ'd an Eccleſiaſtic, who was a Famous Director. But theſe two Angels, inſtead of forwarding this Accommodation, put it farther off, by the different Methods which they took.

Montalzac had not ſeen me above twice, before he gave me to underſtand he was in love with me, and that the only motive that induc'd him to labour a Reconciliation between me and my Husband, was, becauſe that being his Neighbour, it would be the more eaſy for him to viſit me. As for the Director, he troubl'd me with long Diſcourſes that were offenſive to me: He would be proving in Mood and Figure, that I could not in Conſcience live a-part from my Husband; and he repeated ſo many diſobliging Stories about my ill Conduct, that he made me mad. I anſwerd him, that I had nothing to do with his long Sermons, and ſent him away with great indignation. He was not accuſtom'd to be ſo rudely handl'd; but on the other ſide, had the Reputation of an Oracle in all Pious Negociations which he undertook. So that he lookt upon me as a Reprobate: And after he had left me in a kind of Paſſion, he went and gave out in all Companies where I came, that my heart was harden'd, and that I would dye in my Iniquity. Of all the People

that

that ever attack'd my Reputation, no body did it with more malice, nor more elaborately then this devout Eccleſiaſtic. He thought he did God good ſervice in defaming me; and I quickly found my ſelf become a Prey to the fury of Falſe Zealots, who cri'd out that I was a Gangreen'd Member that was to be cut off from the reſt of the Body. Such ſorts of Zealots are never to be employ'd in Affairs of the ſame nature with mine; at leaſt they ought to be inſtructed before they go to work, that Mildneſs and Patience are the moſt approved means to obtain ſucceſs; and operate much more effectually then the Tranſports and Invectives of an over-paſſionate Zeal. 'Tis a ſtrange thing that they, who, by reaſon of the Confidence which their Profeſſion demands, ought to be the moſt ſparing of the honour of their Neighbour, ſhould be, as generally they are, the firſt that rend and tear it with moſt inhumanity. A Director, by vertue of his Office, will never pardon thoſe by whom his Zeal is ill receiv'd: And Zealots, like the Perſon whom we ſpeak of, are ſeldom ſoft and charitable, but when they are flatter'd and applauded.

As for *Montalzac*, ſo ſoon as he had diſcover'd his Paſſion to me, I began as ſoon to ſuſpect all the Advice he gave me: And for fear that by admitting his Viſits, he might think I had ſome intention to flatter his Hopes, I told him, I would acquaint my Husband with his audacious diſcovery of his Amorous Sentiments to his Friend's Wife: And that notwithſtanding my real Inclinations to an Accommodation, I would defer it till he had a more faithful Friend for his Neighbour. *Montalzac*, fuming, to ſee himſelf ſo diſdainfully rejected, reſolv'd to obſerve all my motions, and to inform my Husband of every ſtep I took; which he did exactly; but ſtill ſetting out

the moſt innocent things in what Colours he pleas'd. Thus let a Woman be never ſo diſcreet and wary, 'tis impoſſible ſhe ſhould avoid the ſtroaks of Scandal and Calumny, when ſhe is ſo unfortunate as to be belov'd by wicked People.

While they were thus labouring to reconcile me to my Husband, I had a greater deſire then ever to be parted from him. The Protection of Madam *de Chatillon* had procur'd me the ſame Favour from Monſieur the Prince. I muſt confeſs, that had I not bin ſo powerfully ſupported, I ſhould have bin more willing to have hearken'd to my Husband's Offers; but all that came near me, perſuaded me againſt 'em; ſome out of Intereſt; others becauſe they would not give themſelves the trouble to let me ſee the inconveniences of a Deſign, wherein I ran the hazard of ill Succeſs. And indeed there are few real Friends, that know how to give Women thoſe Counſels which are moſt agreeable to their real Exigencies. There was no body but Mrs. *Laval*, who thought it unfriendly to flatter me. She told me every day, that I could not take a more honourable Courſe then to live with my Husband; and inſiſted that it behov'd me at leaſt to hear the advantageous Offers which he made me. But I was not then in a condition to reliſh the ſolid Reaſons with which ſhe ſupported her wholſome Advice. The ill Uſuge which ſo good a Woman daily ſuffer'd from her Husband, made me afraid of the like from mine. I had not as yet learnt the Leſſon ſhe had done, that the Reputation of a Woman is never ſecure, when ſhe lives aſunder from him, whom God has once united to her. On the other ſide, I thought I ſhould be happy if I could obtain a Separation; and this was that which I only thought it my duty to labour for.

St. Albe had ſtill recourſe to me under the Oppreſſion of his Father; nor can I deny, but that the reſpect with which he always accompani'd his Paſſion for me, made me very deſirous to be ſerviceable to him. I imputed all his Father's ill uſage of him to my ſelf: I was mov'd that he ſhould ſo long diſguize himſelf for my ſake; and moreover, I pardon'd him all reports to which he had expos'd me, in favour of the pleaſing Vengeance which he had given me the occaſion to take upon his Father's Importunities. I was alſo good-natur'd; and tho as yet I felt no motions of affection for him, however I had too great an eſteem for his Perſon, to refuſe him whatever I could in civility contribute toward the making of his Life leſs miſerable. To ſum up all in a word, I did not think it was a crime in him to love me, and I thought that an Amour which was no way offenſive to me, could be no inducement to hinder me from doing that, which I would have done out of generoſity. Thereupon I ſpoke to Madam *de Chatillon* in his favour, lay'd before her the ſad condition of the Young Gentleman, and begg'd of her to make uſe of her credit in his behalf. She was well pleas'd that I took his part; however at the ſame time ſhe made me ſenſible, that it would be another blot upon my Reputation, ſhould it be known that I had any hand in ſerving him. Which made me requeſt her to procure *St. Albe*'s Liberty, yet ſo that I might not be ſeen in the buſineſs. In ſhort, Madam *de Chatillon* ſpoke to Monſieur the Prince, who obtain'd an Order for his Releaſe, and at the ſame time procur'd him an Employment in the Army better then that which he had before.

It was preſently the Publick Opinion that Madam *de Chatillon* had never procur'd *St. Albe*'s Liberty, had it not bin at my requeſt. But give me

leave to queſtion whether I was to be blam'd for concerning my ſelf in his behalf. The Delicacy which I ow'd my Reputation, did not require me to be inſenſible of the misfortunes of a Perſon, who for his merit and his Youth was worthy of compaſſion. There was not any body but my ſelf to whom he could have recourſe; and I never repented of the ſervice I did him. Whatever occaſion afterwards it gave to be objected againſt me as a Crime, it had bin a great piece of Cruelty to have abandon'd *St. Albe* in that deplorable Condition wherein he was; eſpecially when it was in my power to relieve him. How careful ſoever a Woman ought to be of her Honour, I am of opinion that 'tis lawful for her to do a good Action. And when a Woman is defam'd upon thoſe accounts, ſhe is only to complain of certain unhappy Circumſtances that ſometimes will not ſuffer Women to do good Actions unpuniſh'd.

So ſoon as *St. Albe* was got ſafe out of his Father's Clutches by the Credit of Monſieur the Prince, Publick Rumours gave it out more then ever, to be an effect of the love that was between us. This was what his Father ſpread abroad in all Companies; and *Montalzac* was no leſs diligent to inform my Husband of the Common Report. Which oblig'd me to a ſteady Reſolution never to ſee *St. Albe* more: And though I did not think I had deſerv'd any thing of Reproach for having procur'd his Liberty, yet I thought it my duty to avoid a ſort of Viſits which would have drawn a Scandal upon me with much more juſtice.

But *St. Albe* had a heart as generous as my ſelf; and as the injury that I might do my ſelf in acting for him, had not hinder'd me from being ſerviceable

to

to him; he on his ſide could not believe, that the wrong which his Gratitude might do me, was a ſufficient Obſtacle to hinder him from ſhewing it. He thereforefore ſeveral times by the Sollicitations of others begg'd the favour of admitting him but to one ſingle Viſit: But finding me obſtinate in my denial, he reſolv'd to ſee me whatever it coſt him. 'Tis true, I had better have given him admiſſion at firſt without ſo much oppoſition; but my Nicety prov'd prejudicial to me upon this Occaſion.

At the ſame time Madam *de Chatillon* went to her Signiory of *Marlou*, whither I accompani'd her, and where the Abbot *Fouquet* came often to viſit us. Certain it is, that Madam *de Chatillon* would never have ſuffer'd his Aſſiduities, but becauſe ſhe was unwilling to diſpleaſe a man who had too much Credit at Court, which is an Argument that ſhe was not ſo guilty of Coquetry, as a Scandalous Memoir would make her. She was always convinc'd, ſince the Adventure of his Lodgings, that the Abbot had a kindneſs for me; which was the reaſon perhaps that ſhe carri'd me along with her to *Marlou*; in hopes that the Abbot would be more then ever my Servant, or at leaſt that ſhe might put upon my Account the frequent Journeys that he made to *Marlou*. I conjectur'd her Deſign; but I was ſo highly beholding to her, that I was willing for her ſake to expoſe my ſelf to whatever could be ſaid of me; and I think I had reaſon to do as I did. There are certain Obligations that will never permit us to be ungrateful; and I ſhould have thought it a ridiculous piece of Niceneſs to have oppos'd Madam *de Chatillon*'s Deſign. I thought it ſufficient if I did not contribute by my ill Conduct to the Siniſter Conſtructions

which the Journey might produce, if at leaſt ſuch Complacencies might be allow'd of without Reproach. In a word, I ſet my ſelf above all Scruples. Theſe are alſo Circumſtances which it is troubleſome for a Woman to be engag'd in; and where a Woman cannot do a good Action without loſing ſomething of her Honour. But what muſt ſhe do! She muſt either renounce the World for good-and-all, or elſe reſolve to meet with theſe Inconveniences ſometimes.

Book the Fourth.

WHILE we ſtai'd at *Marlou*, the Lord *Digby* who had hir'd a Houſe in the Neighbourhood, thought himſelf oblig'd to pay a Viſit to Madam *de Chatillon*; but this Viſit was attended by ſo many others, that preſently a Report was ſpread about, that my Lord was in love with her; nor was ſhe ſorry it ſhould be imagin'd that my Lord bent all his Aſſiduities to her: For then ſhe was in hopes it would not be nois'd about that ſhe had any kindneſs for Abbot *Fouquet*, when ſhe hearken'd to another.

The Abbot, at his firſt coming to *Marlou*, ſaid nothing to me that ſeem'd to make me any way the Object of his thoughts. But ſo ſoon as he perceiv'd that my Lord was in love with Madam *de Chatillon*, he was deſirous to try whether ſhe would not diſcover ſome effects of her Jealouſy. I underſtood his Intentions by the continual Complaints he made of her to my ſelf: And it may be well believ'd that I had no deſire to comply with his faign'd Affection for me. But the more I was reſolv'd to give him no Anſwer, the more I imagin'd it might be lawful for me to carry my ſelf civilly towards him. This engag'd him farther then I intended; and things came to that paſs, that I thought my ſelf aſſur'd that he lov'd me really. I reſolv'd therefore not to keep him in ſuſpence: For I told him plainly that all his Pains would be in vain. But then I found by Experience, that a Woman hazards her Reputa-

Reputation no leſs by giving marks of a Paſſion of which ſhe is not at all ſenſible, then in declaring an abſolute Averſion.

The Abbot told me, he wonder'd I made no better uſe of his kindneſs, ſince it was in his power to do me an injury by diſcovering my private familiarity with one of my Lord's Domeſtic Servants. Thoſe words ſurpriz'd me, and I deſir'd him to interpret his meaning, which he refus'd to do, but flung out of the Room full of deſpite and anger.

A little while after I was going to inform Madam *de Chatillon* of what had paſs'd; but ſhe interrupted me, telling me that I was a Fool, and ran the hazard of ruining my ſelf paſt all redemption; that it was known that *St. Albe* was with me every day; and that to the end we might ſee one another with more convenience, I had order'd him to diſguiſe himſelf: in ſhort, that he waited upon my Lord in the nature of his *Valet de Chambre*. I proteſted to her, that if that were the Buſineſs, I knew nothing of it; that I had never ſeen *St. Albe* ſince his being releas'd out of Priſon, and that I underſtood not the meaning of theſe Diſcourſes.

However, what Madam *de Chatillon* told me, was true: For *St. Albe*, ſtill poſſeſs'd with his Love, and not knowing what courſe to take upon my refuſal to ſee him, yet underſtanding that I was at *Marlou*, and that my Lord *Digby* pay'd frequent Viſits to Madam *de Chatillon*, got into his Service under a borrow'd Name. But I had not as yet ſeen him; he ſatisfy'd himſelf with only ſeeing me ſometimes in the Crowd, waiting for the Opportunity which he ſought. However he was known, and upon that it was imagin'd that we convers'd together every Day.

I begg'd

I begg'd of Madam *de Chatillon*, that *St. Albe* might be ſpoken to, and deſir'd to be gone, before the Buſineſs made any further noiſe, and that I ſhould be his mortal Enemy if he diſobey'd me.

Upon this Madam *de Chatillon* ſent for *St. Albe*, and lay'd before him the Injury which he did my Reputation. But he appear'd to her ſo pierc'd with ſorrow for having diſpleas'd me, and ſo ready to obey, that ſhe took pity of him, and promis'd him that before ſhe return'd to *Paris*, ſhe would give him an opportunity of ſeeing me, and immediately ſending for me, ſhe left me with him. He threw himſelf at my feet, without being able to ſpeak one word: On the other ſide, I had not the power to chide him; I only lay'd before him the Injuries to which he expos'd me by his Follies; and told him, that it behov'd him to overcome a Paſſion that was neither convenient for him or me; that I would be always one of his Friends; but that I ſhould hate him, if he did not apply himſelf more ſeriouſly to the Duty which he ow'd the King's Service, and made it his endeavour to render himſelf worthy the Favours which Madam *de Chatillon* had procur'd him. This ſaid, away he went, charm'd with my gentle reception of him, and as he left me, told me, that he ſhould never be happy, till he had for my ſake loſt a Life for which he was indebted only to my Goodneſs.

However, this could not be carri'd ſo privately, but that it came to the Ears of *St. Albe*'s Father and *Montalzac*; who Both made it their buſineſs to publiſh this Adventure, ſet forth and garniſh'd with a thouſand horrid Circumſtances of their own.

The Abbot *Fouquet* ſeeing all his Attempts upon me prov'd unſucceſsful, renew'd his Sedulities to

Madam

Madam *de Chatillon:* He affected never to see her, but in my presence; he thought my Lord was better receiv'd then he, grew melancholy upon it, and went to *Paris.* But understanding in a little time after, that my Lord was also about to return, and that he had already tak'n leave of the Dutchess, he came back to *Marlou*, and acted all the parts of a Passionate Lover in his Addresses to her; but finding me always in her Company, and not being able to discourse her freely, he resolv'd to cut me out work.

The Abbot *Fouquet* believ'd, as all the rest of the World did, that I lov'd *St. Albe*; and how he found him out, I know not, but he brought him one day along with him to *Marlou*; telling us a plausible Story, that *St. Albe* was under some trouble, which oblig'd him to conceal himself; and that he had made him believe that Madam *de Chatillon* would not refuse him her Protection.

The Abbot, who thought he had done me an extraordinary kindness, was not a little surpriz'd to see what a cold reception I gave *St. Albe.* For I ask'd him whether he had lost his Wits; whether it were his Resolution that I should hate him, and order'd him to be gone forthwith. But Madam *de Chatillon*, whom the awful Respect and Misfortunes of the Young Gentleman mov'd to compassion, told me, there was no necessity for sending him away so hastily, but that at least he ought to be allow'd some time to rest himself. I could not deny whatever Madam *de Chatillon* desir'd, so that *St. Albe* had now his time to discourse me. So soon therefore as he had an opportunity to speak to me in private, he confess'd that he had no trouble upon him which oblig'd him to seek for sanctuary, that he wonder'd at the Reception which

I gave

him, becauſe the Abbot *Fouquet* had told him that I paſſionately deſir'd his Company: That it was reported at *Paris*, that the Abbot was belov'd by Madam *de Chatillon*; that ſhe ſtay'd at *Marlou* only to have a more regular familiarity with him; that he ſtrengthen'd thoſe Reports himſelf; and laſtly, that he had given him to underſtand, that I would be overjoy'd to have ſome body to bear me company; and that I told him, he would do me a kindneſs to find me out a Companion, and bring him along with him.

I gave Madam *de Chatillon* an Account of all this Diſcourſe, who took no notice of it to the Abbot, but the next day we return'd to *Paris*. 'Twas in vain for her to juſtify her ſelf; for the World was fully poſſeſs'd, that her retiring from *Paris* was only that ſhe might with more freedom enjoy the Abbot's Company; and no body queſtion'd but that *St. Albe* was my particular Favourite.

At our return the *Abbot* came every day to wait upon Madam *de Chatillon*; but ſhe took ſuch particular care to avoid all manner of privacy with him, that 'twas impoſſible for him to ſpeak to her without Witneſſes.

While Madam *de Chatillon* lead this manner of Life with the Abbot, I lodg'd at the *Hoſtel d' Entragues*. For Madam *de Chatillon*, and I, thought it convenient to ſeparate, though that was no hindrance to us from frequently viſiting each other. At the ſame time alſo Mrs. *Laval*, who endeavour'd to make me reliſh a Reconciliation with my Huſband, preſs'd me ſo importunately to hear what he had to offer me, that I ſent for *Montalzac*. He came; but he told me my Husband had alter'd his mind; that my Journey to *Marlou* had very much eſtrang'd him from any Accommodation. I then

declar'd

declar'd to *Montalzac*, that I was ſorry my Huſband was in ſuch a Humour, for that I was ſincerely inclin'd to a Reconciliation with him.

Montalzac aſſur'd me, that if I would give him any hopes of ſucceſs in his Amour, he would work my Husband to other Sentiments. This made me bethink my ſelf of managing *Montalzac* to the beſt advantage; for I knew he had a great power over my Husband; and I conſider'd, that if he did not accompliſh his Negociation, yet that at leaſt I ſhould make it apparent to all the World that I deſir'd an Agreement, by my keeping fair with *Montalzac*. Therefore I play'd the Diſſembler upon this Occaſion; and ſo forbearing to promiſe *Montalzac* that I would reward his Diligence, I left him ſome glimmering Hopes that I might one day not be inſenſible of his Paſſion. From that very moment he imagin'd that his Perſon was not diſpleaſing to me. But believing me prepoſſeſs'd for *St. Albe*, he requir'd a Promiſe from me that I would never ſee him more. To which I return'd him an Ambiguous Reply, without any tartneſs in the leaſt. On the contrary, as if I had bin to juſtify my ſelf in every thing that had bin rumour'd in the World concerning *St. Albe* and my ſelf, I told him, that in truth I was belov'd by him, but that I had always us'd him very ſeverely; that my manner of receiving him at *Marlou*, was a convincing Proof of what I ſaid; that I had forbid him to come near; and that in ſhort, I had quite given over ſeeing him; when juſt as I had ſpok'n the words, *St. Albe* comes into my Chamber.

I leave ye now to judge at the Trouble and Aſtoniſhment I was in; becauſe that really I had not ſeen *St. Albe* in a long time before, and that I knew not

not what was become of him. I ſpoke to him therefore like one that was heartily angry with him, and bid him be gone immediately. Nor did *St. Albe* dare to offend me, but retir'd with all the ſubmiſſion imaginable, begging pardon for his having diſpleas'd me. However, his unexpected Arrival perſuaded *Montalzac* that all I had told him was falſe; and becauſe that *St. Albe* withdrew ſo quickly, he thought it to be a Trick concerted between us. Oh, ſaid he in a kind of Ironical Ralliery, You are very ſincere indeed; who dares queſtion your Vertue? The World certainly does ye a great deal of wrong to ſuſpect your Chaſtity: In ſhort, he gave me ſo much offenſive Language, that he made me angry. I then repented I had ſent away *St. Albe*, and I was juſt about to have ſent for him back, to let *Montalzac* ſee how little I car'd for what he thought of me; ſo true it is, that Women care not what they do, when they are provok'd However, I did not recall *St. Albe*, but ſatisfy'd my ſelf with only ſending away *Montalzac* with a befitting Indignation.

Now as *St. Albe* went out of the Houſe, he underſtood that the Perſon whom he ſaw in my Chamber was the Marquis of *Montalzac*, and therefore calling to mind at the ſame time the ill Offices he had done me, he reſolv'd to wait his coming forth, and revenge the Injuries I had complain'd of: *St. Albe* never conſider'd the Conſequences of what he was going to do, but follow'd the motions of his Anger. So ſoon therefore as he ſaw *Montalzac*, he clos'd up with him, and asking him how he durſt defame a Lady who deſerv'd to be ſpoken of with ſo much reſpect, he preſently forc'd him to draw his Sword. For ſome time they fought without any advantage; but at length *Montalzac*, after he had wounded

wounded *St. Albe*, fell dead at his feet. This Duel was fought almoſt under my Windows, and the noiſe with which the People, who, though too late, made haſte to part 'em, fill'd the Street, oblig'd me to open 'em; where the firſt ſight that ſtrook my Eye, was *St. Albe*, who, though ſcarce able to ſtand, endeavour'd to gain the Door of the *Hoſtel' d' Entragues*. I could not be ſo cruel as to ſhut it gainſt him; on the other ſide, I ran down, and was the firſt who order'd him to be let in. So ſoon as he ſaw me, he fell at my feet, and with a languiſhing Tone, Madam, ſaid he, I dye the happy Perſon that has reveng'd the Injuries done you. But I begg'd the Maſter of the Houſe to carry him without delay through a Back-door into a Neighbour's Houſe, where his Wounds were dreſt the firſt time; and from thence I took care to have him remov'd to another Houſe a little farther off. And by this means it ſo happen'd, that the Purſuit, which was after him, could not find him out.

However, the thing happen'd at ſuch a time that Duels were puniſh'd more ſeverely then ever, and I ſaw that *St. Albe* would ſtand in need of Great Credit to procure a Gentle Proſecution on the King's Side. To this purpoſe, away I flew to Madam *de Chatillon*'s, and inform'd her of the whole Adventure. There I luckily met the Abbot *Fouquet*, who promis'd me that the Informations ſhould not be given to the Proctor-General his Brother, till he had view'd 'em; and that he would ſo order it, that it ſhould appear as if *St. Albe* had bin firſt aſſaulted.

The Abbot was as good as his word; ſo that by his Diligence and his Care, no harm enſu'd, but *St. Albe* had liberty to appear abroad, ſo ſoon as his Health would permit him; his Pardon was pro-

cur'd

cur'd and diſpatch'd; ſo that nothing remain'd of this Adventure, but the Prejudice which it did my ſelf. For how was it otherwiſe to be believ'd but that I had a kindneſs for *St. Albe*, conſidering what I had done for him? Nevertheleſs I only ſerv'd him out of generoſity and compaſſion, and my Opinion was, that Women, the moſt ſevere Profeſſors of Vertue, would have done as much as I did. All the while that *St. Albe* lay private, I never went to ſee him. I muſt confeſs, I put a conſtraint upon my ſelf in ſo doing; becauſe that beſides that my Viſits might have contributed to his Cure, the love which he teſtifi'd for me was accompani'd with a charming reſpect and awful ſubmiſſion. Perhaps the greateſt part of Women, who enjoy an unblebliſh'd Reputation, would not have bin ſo nice upon ſuch an Occaſion.

Nevertheleſs, when I conſider'd what the World talk'd publickly of *St. Albe*, and my ſelf, it was an affliction to me, and I thought my ſelf unhappy: For in ſhort, *St. Albe*'s unintereſted Zeal did me as much harm, as the Character of thoſe who lov'd me with leſs niceneſs. Thus there is no Lover which it does not behove a Woman to be afraid of, ſeeing there is ſo much danger in the Viſits of an honeſt man.

Now in regard the Abbot *Fouquet* believ'd that I had a love for *St. Albe*, he was no leſs perſuaded that I was greatly beholding to himſelf, and therefore thought he had a right to demand of me ſome Marks of my acknowledgment. He told me, that ſeeing he had for my ſake ſav'd the Life of my Lover, he expected from me a piece of Service which I could not deny him without Ingratitude; which was to give him information how Madam *Chatillon* demean'd her ſelf with the Marſhal *d' Hocquincourt*,

who for ſome Months had ſeem'd to be very much her Servant. I made him anſwer, that I had not yet obſerv'd that Madam *de Chatillon* had any kindneſs for thoſe that had a love for her, and that ſhe only admitted 'em into her Company out of civility. I added, that it became him better to underſtand Madam *de Chatillon*'s Character, which was rather to ſeek the ſettlement of a Good Fortune, then to live under the uncertainty of Wanton Amours.

The Abbot *de Fouquet* told me, he knew that well enough; however, he deſir'd me to do him the favour which he requeſted of me.

But though I was oblig'd to the Abbot *Fouquet*, yet I thought my ſelf much more beholding to Madam *de Chatillon*; and therefore I fail'd not to give her an account of the Truſt which the Abbot endeavour'd to repoſe in me. To which, *You are not the firſt*, ſaid Madam *de Chatillon* to me, *whom he has tri'd to engage to inform him of all my Actions. He is a jealous Friend, who cannot endure that any body elſe ſhould have a kindneſs for me; and becauſe I cannot love him after ſuch a manner as he deſires, he conceits that I reſerve that ſort of friendſhip for another. With theſe thoughts he torments himſelf; all thoſe that viſit me diſturb his reſt, and upon the leaſt appearance he frames Suſpicions to himſelf, which he will not ſuffer to be rooted from his mind; he diſperſes 'em in the world, and finds out people that ſpread 'em abroad in all Companies.* Is it not He who has endeavour'd to perſuade all the Earth that I love Monſieur *de Candale*, and Monſieur *de Nemours*? I do not wonder therefore that the Viſits of Marſhal *d' Hoquincourt* alarum him; 'tis the Character which he bears. But you know, added ſhe, the Reaſons that induc'd me to be civil to him: And I muſt now diſſemble. Do you make as if you had ne-

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ver ſpok'n to me; I permit you to give him an account of my Demeanour with the Marſhal; but it will be to no purpoſe for you to tell him the truth; he will never believe ye; he will accuſe ye of Diſſimulation; for he is a Man who will not be ſatisfi'd with any Relations that make his Injuſtice appear: In a word, 'tis his deſire that People ſhould ſpeak ill of me.

What Madam *de Chatillon* told me, came to paſs; for the Abbot believ'd I would never betray her; and when I aſſur'd him that no man could have a juſt Suſpicion of Madam *de Chatillon*'s Vertue; he told me, he well knew what thoughts it behov'd him to have of it, and flew into a paſſion becauſe I would not tell him an untruth.

Nevertheleſs, Madam *de Chatillon* forbore not to ſee him, but ſtill admitted his Viſits: And this Compliance alone it was which caus'd her Conduct to be ſuſpected; but for this, ſhe had preſerv'd entire the Reputation which ſhe deſerv'd.

For my own part, I had ſtill more reaſon to complain then Madam *de Chatillon*, being oblig'd to be careful how I offended my Friends, and finding my ſelf in ſuch a condition as gave opportunities to authorize whatever the World would ſay of me. For when a Woman lives a-part from her Huſband, ſhe furniſhes Diſcourſe with Weapons againſt her ſelf; nor is it thought an injury done her to ſuſpect her Behaviour.

St. Albe was no ſooner cur'd, but his Father dy'd; and happy for him he dy'd ſo ſuddainly, that he had no time to make a Will, whereby to diſinherit him.

The firſt uſe that *St. Albe* made of his Inheritance, was to offer it to my ſelf. He wrote to me, that I was Miſtreſs of all his Eſtate; and deſir'd I wou'd

permit him to make it over to me by a Deed of Gift, for a particular Reaſon. His Friends were all for having him to marry; and in regard it was impoſſible to conſent to any ſuch Propoſal, he thought to rid himſelf of their Importunities, by letting 'em ſee that he had diſpos'd of his Eſtate.

Though this Propoſal ſeem'd to be very extravagant, yet I was not inſenſible of the Gentleman's Generoſity. And at the ſame time I bewail'd my Misfortune to be belov'd by a man, who, the more capable he was to perform Heroic Actions, the more he prejudic'd my Reputation. And how did I expoſe my ſelf to the Fury of his Relations, when they ſhould come to underſtand the Deſign which he had propounded to me! A Rock ſo much the more dangerous, by how much I felt my ſelf more pleaſingly flatter'd; for I knew then, it would not be poſſible for me to hate a man that gave me every day new occaſions to eſteem him.

Had I not had a thouſand Reaſons of Prudence and Vertue, yet methought I would not have bin without 'em then, to render my ſelf worthy the Sentiments which *St. Albe* had for me; and I deſir'd no other Proof to juſtify my Conduct. From that time forward I was convinc'd, that there was no Woman, let her have but never ſo little Reaſon, that can deny her ſelf not to be touch'd with Principles of Honour, when ſhe is belov'd by a Man who only deſerves to be the Object of her Affection. And if we meet with Women every day who are ſomewhat nice in fixing their Amours, 'tis becauſe they can find no Perſon who merits a more refined Delicacy. For generally the Character of thoſe by whom they are belov'd, is that which procures 'em their happy or unhappy Deſtiny; and nothing

teaches

teaches 'em their duty better, then a Lover who underſtands the performance of his own.

That which *St. Albe* did on his part, taught me what it behov'd me to do on mine. I reſolv'd not only to refuſe his Offers, but alſo to oblige him to marry. I ſent him word, that he would ruin me by doing what he intended; but if he deſir'd I ſhould have a kindneſs for him as long as I liv'd, that it behov'd him to comply with the Deſires of his Relations; which I conjur'd him to accompliſh, by the care it became him to have of my Reputation.

My Anſwer afflicted him; he fell ſick; and during his Sickneſs he wrote me ſeveral Letters, wherein he endeavour'd to perſuade me to conſent to the Deed of Gift. But I reſolutely refus'd him; and wrote to him freſh Exhortations to marry, unleſs he had a mind to loſe my Favour for ever. And indeed it was eaſy to be ſeen, that I could never have avoided the Perſecutions of his Family, had they had the leaſt intimation of his Deſign.

As for the Donation, I ſuppoſe he conſider'd the ill conſequences that would infallibly have attended it, and therefore never ſpoke to me more concerningit; but he ſent me word that he could not reſolve to marry; for that ſeeing I had refus'd him, he valu'd no body elſe beſide. And the pleaſure which this Sentiment infus'd into me, hinder'd me from oppoſing it, which was the reaſon that I could not avoid being made the Object of what the Malice of his Relations could throw upon me.

For in regard that they were very earneſt with him to marry, and ſo much the rather, becauſe a conſiderable Match was offer'd him, which they were afraid of miſſing, they imputed his refuſal of it to mee. So that his Kindred being prepoſſeſs'd with

that Opinion, broke all the Laws of Decorum with me, and fell upon my Reputation with all the cruelty imaginable. On the one ſide they ſent to my Husband, and peal'd it in my Mother's Ears that *St. Albe* kept me; and on the other ſide they hanted *St. Albe* with ridiculous Stories of my pretended Amours. And things were carri'd ſo high, that a Great Lord, who had a mind to marry his Daughter to *St. Albe*, propos'd the ſending me away to my Husband by force, which I had notice of; and upon that, falling out with *St. Albe* in good earneſt, I ſent him word that I would hate him, and never ſee him more, if he did not comply with the Deſires of his Friends.

He tri'd divers ways to diſpence with this Neceſſity; but ſeeing that the longer he delay'd his Marriage, the more bitterly they inveigh'd againſt me, he promis'd to marry the Party propos'd to him: He went to ſee her, and the Articles of the Contract were ſoon ſign'd.

After he had given me this proof of his Submiſſion, he begg'd leave that he might pay me a Viſit; nor did I think it proper to refuſe him. He came to me with ſuch a face of Grief, as made me repent of what I had exacted from him; nor could I diſſemble how great a Sharer I was with him in his Sorrow. But in ſhort, ſaid I, there is no other way for you to aſſure me of your Love. Marry then; and to compleat the proof of your Affection for me, you muſt likewiſe love the Perſon whom you are going to marry; and as you demean your ſelf to her, I ſhall judge of your love to me. But have a care how you behave your ſelf with the leaſt ſcorn and contempt, for the reaſon of it will be preſently conjectur'd. Well, Madam, repli'd *St. Albe*, with a ſigh, I will do what whatever you command me;

me; but my Relations and my Wife ſhall know, that 'tis to you they are beholding for it; and upon condition that they come and ask you pardon for the Injuries they have done you. No, ſaid I, that would produce a bad effect; for your Wife will never love ye, when ſhe ſhould come to underſtand that any other then her ſelf had oblig'd you to marry her. But as for your Relations, I give you leave to let 'em ſee that you had all along a kindneſs for me; nevertheleſs, that I never was the Woman who gave you bad Counſel. At leaſt permit me, Madam, repli'd *St. Albe*, to bring my Mother hither, that ſhe may be acquainted with your Sentiments, and by that means be enabl'd afterwards to undeceive thoſe who verily believe 'twas you that obſtructed my Marriage; for I proteſt, ſaid he, concluding, that I will never marry, if ſomebody does not know, that it was only done by your Command. I anſwer'd him, that he might bring his Mother to me; and that I would gladly ſee her, ſince it was a Satisfaction which he would not be deni'd.

Thus *St. Albe*, by cauſing this ſort of Amends to be made me, thought he had found a means to bind me in a Tye of Friendſhip with his Mother, that ſo he might have afterwards opportunities to ſee me. Nor did he conceal this Inducement from me; and I was ſenſible of it, becauſe I found that I could hardly diſpence with a perpetual abſence from him: Beſides, that I thought it would be a means to ſilence the Prittle-prattle of the World, when they ſhould ſee me in friendſhip with his Wife, and the reſt of his Relations.

His Mother fail'd not to come and ſee me with the firſt; for ſince the Adventure that befel her Husband, ſhe had an inclination for me. And

though she thought as well as others that her Son and I had a mutual kindness one for another, yet for all that she desir'd my friendship, and requested me that I would still continue a Friend to her Son.

St. Albe, orejoy'd to have the liberty of seeing me, concluded his Marriage within a few days after with so much the less reluctancy: Though indeed I believe he would never have consented to it, had he bin oblig'd by his Marriage to forbear my Company.

They who imagin'd that I was an Obstruction to his Marriage, admir'd when they saw the Business done, and that I was every day with his Wife and his Mother. But in regard they could not easily believe that any Woman could put such a constraint upon her self upon such an Occasion, 'twas given out that I would never have consented to *St. Albe*'s Matrimony, but only to allay the Resentment of his Family; and that I might be in a condition to admit of his Sedulities with less disturbance; and in regard his Wife had both Beauty and Merit to be belov'd, she became most furiously jealous of me. Her Husband, who had all the Good Qualities of an Honest Civil Gentleman, behav'd himself with all exactness towards her; but though she had no reason to be dissatisfi'd with his Carriage, she exacted from him never to see me more, and carri'd her self with an affected coldness toward me. But then I perceiv'd that I had done my self an injury to enter into that Society. For a Woman certainly upon those Occasions ought always to resolve never to keep company either with the Husband or the Wife; which I had a desire to do, that I might make amends for the fault I had committed; so that I refrain'd from going any more to

St. Albe's

St. Albe's Houſe. Upon which he came to my Lodging, and ask'd me the reaſon of ſo ſuddain a change? In anſwer to which, I ſaid nothing of his Wife's coldneſs toward me; but only that my Mother and my Husband were diſpleas'd that I continu'd my acquaintance with him; and therefore becauſe I was upon the point of Reconciliation, 'twas but convenient that I ſhould ſhun all Occaſions of Diſtaſt.

This reviv'd *St. Albe*'s former Griefs and Vexations; he upbraided me for having render'd him the moſt unfortunate of Men; that he ſhould never endure his Wife ſo long as I refrain'd his Houſe, and that he ſhould never forbear to manifeſt his Averſion for her: In a Word, that I was about to cauſe a terrible Diſorder in his Family. On the other ſide I laid it to his Charge that he would certainly ruin me, and that if he had any value or kindneſs for me, he would not oppoſe my reſolution to forbear ſeeing him. I beg'd him alſo to live lovingly with his Wife, becauſe that if he did otherwiſe, people would be ſure to impute it to his Kindneſs for me. No, Madam, cry'd *St. Albe*, I will never obey you in this, what ever come of it. It will never be poſſible for me to have any complacency for a perſon whom I ne're thought worthy of my Friendſhip, but only ſo far as I thought ſhe ſerv'd to do us juſtice. She had indeed the confidence to deſire me never to ſee you more; but as to that I told her my mind, and ſhe ſeem'd to be ſatisfy'd with the reaſons I gave her for my ſeeing you; and when you pleaſe to honour her with your Viſits, I will undertake ſhe ſhall receive you as becomes her. I anſwer'd, that he was not to expect that I ſhould any more come to his Houſe; that it would awaken his Wifes jealouſie;

and

and beſides that, I was beginning to think ſeriouſly of reconciling my ſelf to my Husband. He would have ſaid a great deal more, but I refus'd to hearken to him, and bid him be gone.

He return'd the next day, but I deni'd him admittance, and at length he deſpair'd of ever making me alter my Reſolution. But when it was known about the Town that I went no more to viſit his Wife, 'twas then given out that ſhe had forbid me the Houſe; and this Report confirm'd what had bin formerly ſpread abroad concerning me. I muſt confeſs I found my ſelf under very unfortunate Circumſtances; for I could not carry my ſelf with that circumſpectneſs upon this Occaſion, but that ſome ill interpretation or other would be put upon my Behaviour; ſo that I rather choſe to ſuffer that it ſhould be ſaid *St. Albe* had ſacrific'd me to the jealouſy of his Wife, then that it ſhould be reported he had ſacrific'd his Wife to his Affection for me.

But when *St. Albe* began to be aſſur'd of my Reſolution never to ſee him more, he laid aſide all conſtraint upon himſelf, and began to lead his Wife a very ill life: Upon which it was preſently given out, that I had adviſ'd him to take that Courſe to ſatisfy my Revenge.

So ſoon therefore as I found that *St. Albe* neglected to purſue the Counſel I had given him, I began to abate of the good opinion I had of him. He appear'd to me to be too much like other men; I accus'd him for want of Niceneſs; and I was ſo unjuſt as to imagine with my ſelf that his Behaviour offended me: I thought he fail'd in the reſpect and value which he ow'd me; and therefore I reſolv'd to cure him of his Paſſion; ſeeing there was no other way to oblige him to live lovingly with a

Woman,

Woman, whom he would have thought ſufficiently amiable had he not had a love for me.

I communicated this Deſign to Miſtris *Laval*, and we agreed together, that I ſhould make a ſhew of being in love with a Gentleman whoſe Name was *Savigny*, with whom I had bin acquainted for ſome time, and whom I frequently ſaw at Madam *de Chatillon*'s, whoſe Kiſman he was; and that Miſtris *Laval* ſhould go to *St. Albe*, and tell him as a great Secret, of this new Amour of mine. I was in hopes by this means that *St. Albe* would have relinquiſh'd all his kindneſs for me, and that he would have liv'd lovingly with his Wife, when he thought me prepoſſeſs'd for another. I was too well acquainted with *St. Albe*'s Diſcretion, not to be afraid leſt he ſhould make an ill uſe of this Confidence, or that it was not in his power to defame me. Which made me determine to give him proofs of this imaginary Intriegue by ſeveral Letters which I feign'd to have written to *Savigny*, and which Mrs. *Laval* was to ſhew *St. Albe* as one of the greateſt Secrets in the World. I muſt confeſs, this Artifice lay a little too open to diſcovery. For they that were but never ſo little acquainted with me, knew full well that I had no manner of private engagement with *Savigny*, and that he never came to my Lodging. However, I fanci'd that *St. Albe* might ſuffer himſelf to be ſurpriz'd by it; and perhaps it might be no trouble to me to try him that way; or at the worſt, I thbught that if he diſcover'd the Artifice, he would underſtand thereby that it was my abſolute deſire that he would live more lovingly then he did with his Wife, ſince I made uſe of ſo ſtrange a means to oblige him to it.

A part of what I foreſaw came exactly to paſs. For it was not in *St. Albe*'s power to have an Opi-

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nion meanly favourable of me; ſince never any man made good the Character of a True Lover better then he did, which is to have an inviolable eſteem for the Perſon whom he loves. But it was not only the value he had for me, that hinder'd him from giving credit to the Secret that was told him with ſo much caution; the good Opinion he had of Miſtris *Laval*, would not permit him to believe her. He was convinc'd that a Woman ſo much my Friend as ſhe was, could never be induc'd to betray me; ſo that he told Madam *Laval* in plain terms, that he would not believe one tittle of all her Inſinuations.

Mrs. *Laval* orejoy'd to find him ſo honeſt a Gentleman, acknowledg'd to him, that I had made uſe of that means to let him underſtand how much his Harſhneſs to his Wife offended her.

St. Albe could not refrain from tears, when he ſaw that I did the ſame thing to engage him to his Duty, which others would have done to draw him off from it. And he deſir'd Mrs. *Laval* to give her ſelf the trouble of delivering me the following Letter.

I *Surrender, Madam, to your Goodneſs in my behalf.* Mrs. Laval *can tell ye, that I never heſitated one moment to take your part againſt your ſelf. The eſteem which I have for you, made me judge at firſt ſight, that you had a deſign to impoſe upon me. But undeceive your ſelf; for nothing ſhall ever create in me any other Opinion of your Vertue, then what I firſt conceiv'd, when I ſacrific'd my heart and Life to your Service. I ſhall ſubmit to what you enjoin me: However, permit me to beg of you, in recompence of this Sacrifice, a ſhare in your heart: I cannot forbear admiring it; and I ſuffer extremity of pain, becauſe I cannot deſerve it. Aſſiſt me to ſupport the*

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Misfortune to which you condemn me, in obliging me to ſhew another what I can never be truly ſenſible of for any but your ſelf: Convince me from time to time that you have not quite forgotten me; and ſuffer me to flatter my ſelf that I ſhould have bin more happy, if your Duty and mine would have allow'd me that felicity.

Mrs. *Laval* deliver'd me this Letter, and ſhe wept when ſhe gave me an account of what ſhe had obſerv'd of Great and Heroic in the Sentiments of *St. Albe.* We both together admir'd and bewail'd the unhappy Chance of my Deſtiny, which made ſo many People cheriſh ſuch bad Opinions of me, thoſe eſpecially among whom I endeavour'd to gain that eſteem which I thought was due to me, while the only Perſon that I would have had prepoſſeſs'd againſt me, could not ſuffer an ill thought concerning me to enter his Breaſt.

How happy ſhould I have bin, ſaid I to Mademoiſel *Laval*, if all men were of his Character! Alas! why are they not ſo? —— what a deteſtable inclination have they to judge amiſs of Women? At leaſt, added I, ſince I have met with one who partakes not either of their Blindneſs or Malignity, it is but juſt that I ſhould have an eſteem for him only, and this is that I will do the whole remainder of my Life. Happy if they who were the Authors of my firſt Affections had reſembl'd him. But no, repli'd I preſently, it would have vex'd me to the Soul, if ever any other but *St. Albe* had merited an eſteem which I would have beſtow'd upon another. Well, ſaid Mrs. *Laval*, but what at length is your Reſolution? Will you grant him his Requeſt? will you let him hear from you ſometimes? Alas, repli'd I, wherefore ſhould I not? Can I do too much for a man that thinks nothing

too

too good for me? Go, find him out, I conjure ye, and tell him he may reck'n upon what ever I can grant him without prejudice to my Duty; and if ever I come to be in a condition——— But ſtay, repli'd I as ſoon, we muſt not flatter our ſelves with idle Hopes—— tell him I am wholly his— provided that he never ſees me, and that he never requires any Letters from me; which though they may be altogether innocent, will however render me ſuſpected. You have much ado, repli'd Mrs. *Laval*, to take any Reſolution, Madam——— for my part I adviſe ye not to ſend to him at all; but to wait till he performs what he promiſes to ye, and that an opportunity preſent it ſelf to let him know how ſenſible you are of it. I ſubmitted to her Advice; though I muſt acknowledge, that had Mrs. *Laval* but never ſo little enclin'd to have giv'n me other Counſel, I ſhould without delay have taken it; and it may be I might not have bin ſufficiently Miſtreſs of my ſelf, to have prevented the declaring to him the entire Paſſion I had for him.

If I had reaſon to be ſatisfi'd with *St. Albe*'s Letter, I was much more pleas'd with him, when I underſtood his kind demeanour toward his Wife. He was ſo careful in his behaviour, ſo full of reſpect and complacency, that he was become a Model for all Husbands. Whatever paſſion I had for him, I had no inclination to be jealous of him: And I thought my ſelf ſo well acquainted with *St. Albe*'s Character, that I attributed to my ſelf whatever he did for his Wife.

But the World made another judgment of the Matter: People believ'd that *St. Albe*'s kindneſs to his Wife proceeded from his being ſeparated from my Company: And they cri'd, there was all the reaſon in the World to remove me from him, ſeeing

ſeeing it was I who ſet 'em formerly at variance.

St. Albe was at his Wit's end when he heard 'em talk at this rate; but he durſt not undeceive 'em; for that if he intended to live in peace with his Wife, and follow exactly my Advice, it behov'd him to be careful how he diſcover'd me to have any hand in the change of his Humour.

But Madam *de St. Albe*, being fully perſuaded that her Husband's kindneſs to her was only due to her own Merit, was the firſt that rail'd againſt me in all Places. 'Tis true, ſhe was more reſerv'd in the preſence of her Husband, before whom ſhe durſt not ſo much as utter my Name, for fear of recalling to remembrance what was paſt. Of this every body inform'd me, and adviſ'd me to ask *St. Albe* the reaſon of it. But I had no mind to do it, and I found my ſelf enclin'd to ſpeak as much good of her, as ſhe ſpoke ill of me. I muſt confeſs, this Moderation deſerv'd no great applauſe; for methought, that a Woman under my Circumſtances could not well do otherwiſe; beſides that I lov'd *St. Albe* too well, not to pardon the Tittle-tattle of his Wife, upon whom I could not be reveng'd, without ſetting 'em again together by the Ears.

About this time he was engag'd to go to the Army; and becauſe he thought my Allowance not ſufficient to maintain me, he found out Monſieur *Brice*, who was entruſted with the payment of it; and putting a conſiderable Sum into his hands, he deſir'd him to let me want for nothing; and ſo to manage the Buſineſs, that I might think my ſelf beholding only to Mr. *Brice*. And he, was ſo exact in the performance of what *St. Albe* had recommended to his care, that I was a long time ignorant whence this Generoſity proceeded. But when I un-

I underſtood it, my eſteem and my love encreas'd for a man ſo worthy to be belov'd. I muſt acknowledge I needed no new Teſtimonies of his Merit to make me reſolve to love him as long as I liv'd: I was fully determin'd upon that already; but at the ſame time I promis'd my ſelf to do nothing for him but what might correſpond with my Duty. The innocent Pleaſures of loving *St. Albe*, and being belov'd by him, was my comfort in the midſt of all my Sufferings with which my froward Deſtiny afflicted me; and whatever compaſſion the recital of my Misfortunes drew upon me, I thought it a thing to be really envi'd, that I ſhould have the happineſs to meet, in the Perſon of *St. Albe*, with a Lover worthy to poſſeſs my heart, and in the Perſon of Mrs. *Laval*, with a Friend that ſo well merited my Confidence.

St. Albe's abſence gave his Wife her full liberty to exerciſe her hatred againſt me: Nothing pleas'd her ſo much as to hear my Conduct ill ſpoken of. Her Goſſips, who underſtood her Sentiments, fed her Malice with their compliance; ſo that at length ſhe reſolv'd my ruin to all intents and purpoſes. And to bring about her Deſign, ſhe bethought her ſelf of contriving ſeveral Letters of her own head, wherein ſhe ſtufft a world of horrible Fictions relating to Mrs. *Laval* and my ſelf. Theſe Letters ſhe put into the hands of the Director, of whom I have already made ſome mention; who believing that the Glory of God requir'd him to be reveng'd upon me for ſlighting his Admonitions, ſhew'd 'em with a hypocritical gravity to Mrs. *Laval*'s Husband, and after that to my own Husband, and my Mothe. Nor did he ſtop there, but found a way to have the Queen inform'd of my looſe behaviour, with an humble Petition that ſhe would be pleas'd

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to interpoſe her Authority to remedy thoſe Diſorders which he could not but lament; and of which he might have eaſily ſeen the falſhood, would he but have taken the pains to examine by whom thoſe Letters were written. But Prudence and Charity are Vertues to which Hypocriſy is a Stranger.

Book the Fifth.

WHEN Reputation is become a prey to the indiſcreet Zeal of counterfeit Godlineſs, the Miſchief is without a Remedy. The Letters before mention'd made a moſt terrible noiſe; and Madam *de Chatillon* inform'd me that the Queen had bin made acquainted with 'em, and that ſhe had bin importun'd for an Order to have us Both confind, Mrs. *Laval* and my ſelf. All this was done by the pious Care of the Director before mention'd, as I have already ſaid. And I made no queſtion but that our Enemies had obtain'd their deſires, had not Madam *de Chatillon* bin ſo kind as to undeceive the Queen. But ſhe juſtifi'd me in ſuch a manner, that the Director could do us no harm.

In the mean time Madam *de Chatillon* advis'd us to betake our ſelves tò ſome Convent, till our Huſbands could be brought either by fair or foule means to do us juſtice. Which Advice we foNow'd; and I can ſay we did it without reluctancy.

After this I made it my buſineſs to bring my Suit to an end. To which effect Madam *de Chatillon* took the pains to ſpeak to my Judges, and the Cauſe was juſt ready for judgment, when my Mother came to me, and propos'd an accommodation between me and my Husband. I was apt to believe that my Mother did this of her own head, without any Order from my Husband: She was afraid, leſt having ſuch powerful Friends at Court as I had, that I ſhould have obtain'd an abſolute Separation,

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and liv'd continually at *Paris*; where, for her that ſtill aſpir'd to go for a young Widow, a Daughter of my years was the moſt mortifying Sight in the World, and therefore ſhe would fain have got me out of the way: But ſhe did not find me to be in ſuch haſte to correſpond with her Deſires. I told her that I had bin too much abus'd to be ſatisfy'd with a private Agreement, and therefore I would be juſtifi'd in Publick: Which Anſwer did not a little exaſperate her againſt me, ſo that we parted no way ſatisfi'd one with another. But for my part, I muſt confeſs 'twas not ſo much my Husband's ill uſage, and my Mother's unkindneſs which oblig'd me ſtill to thwart her in what ſhe deſir'd: I was mad that a Mother, who had always forſak'n me when ſhe ſaw me without ſupport, ſhould make her Applications to me, when ſhe ſaw I had no more need of her.

Therefore, as I ſaid before, I mov'd every day by my Counſel for Sentence in my Cauſe, and was juſt upon the point to obtain it, when the Death of my Husband put an end to the Suit after an unexpected manner. He was return'd home with an intention, as they ſaid, to have ſuborn'd Witneſſes againſt me; at what time he was ſeiz'd with a ſuddain Sickneſs, that gave him no time to do me juſtice. However, he declar'd before his death, that he repented of his unkindneſs to me; that he had bin jealous without a cauſe of my behaviour, for which he blam'd himſelf; and that he deſir'd that all the World might know, that I was innocent of all thoſe things which Scandal had laid to my charge, and of which he confeſs'd himſelf to be the chief cauſe.

The Tydings of his Death reach'd firſt my Mother's ears, before they came to mine, ſo that ſhe

made more then ordinary haſte to inform me of it, and it would have bin a difficult thing to have added any thing to her Demonſtrations of Joy and Tenderneſs. All the Ladies in the Convent came to complement me upon the News. But then I, who took notice that I was lookt upon before by the ſame Perſons as a Woman whoſe company they rather ſuffer'd, then were plea'd with among 'em, was ſtruck with admiration at their Civilities, and how much they congratulated themſelves, that I had done them the honour to make choice of their Houſe for my Aboad.

The firſt Counſel that my Mother gave me, was to go forthwith into the Province, and look after the fair Eſtate which my Son was then Heir to: But the Death of another Perſon, which happen'd almoſt at the ſame time, chang'd my Fortuue much more to my advantage. For my Brother being about Fifteen years of Age, had over-heated himſelf in the Colledge, and dying of a Pleuriſy, left me the ſole Heireſs of a conſiderable Fortune.

My Mother was ſo griev'd for the loſs of my Brother, that I thought ſhe would never have ſurviv'd him. I offer'd her all the Conſolation that I could give her, and might have bin a comfort to her, would ſhe but have done me that juſtice that would have made me capable of being ſo; but I endeavour'd in vain to perſuade her, that ſhe ſhould regain in me what ſhe had loſt in my Brother: She had the ſame Sentiments of me as formerly; whether it were, that ſhe imagin'd her former Harſhneſs to me would not permit me to love her, or that ſhe ſtill continu'd her malicious Inclinations to ruin me.

The change of my Fortune was ſo much the more accept ble, as being that which I the leaſt expected.

pected. The first thing then that I did in this same Exaltation of my Fortune, was to bethink my self of a way to make Madam *Laval* some satisfaction for the Obligations she had laid upon me. I reconcil'd her to her Husband, to whom I lent a considerable Sum of Money to buy an Employment in the King's Houshold; but he liv'd not long in his new Advancement. After that, I would have provided an advantageous Settlement for Mrs. *Laval*; but she testifi'd so great a desire to live with me, that I consented to it; so much the rather, because I was assur'd of her Sincerity, and that she had a more then ordinary love for me.

While I was giving these demonstrations of my Gratitude, the World, accustom'd to empoyson all my Actions, fail'd not to give out, that I had procur'd an Employment for Mrs. *Laval*'s Husband for no other reason, but because I was in love with him. But I shall not need to say any thing in contradiction to such an irrational Calumny.

As for *St. Albe*, I had still a passionate love for him; and I answer'd the marks of Tenderness which he continually gave me, as much as Decency and Decorum would permit me. It may well be thought that the change of my Fortune was no small pleasure to him: And I must confess, that when I found my self my own Mistress, I repented that I had oblig'd him to marry; I should have bin overjoy'd to have made him a Sharer with me in my Estate. 'Tis true, he was not my Equal in Quality, nor rich enough to pretend to marry me; but what he had done for me, and the respect with which he had always accompany'd his Passion, made me believe that there was no Person but he in the World who was worthy of me; but there was no ground for me to give him any such hope. On the

made more then ordinary haſte to inform me of it, and it would have bin a difficult thing to have added any thing to her Demonſtrations of Joy and Tenderneſs. All the Ladies in the Convent came to complement me upon the News. But then I, who took notice that I was lookt upon before by the ſame Perſons as a Woman whoſe company they rather ſuffer'd, then were plea'd with among 'em, was ſtruck with admiration at their Civilities, and how much they congratulated themſelves, that I had done them the honour to make choice of their Houſe for my Aboad.

The firſt Counſel that my Mother gave me, was to go forthwith into the Province, and look after the fair Eſtate which my Son was then Heir to: But the Death of another Perſon, which happen'd almoſt at the ſame time, chang'd my Fortuue much more to my advantage. For my Brother being about Fifteen years of Age, had over-heated himſelf in the Colledge, and dying of a Pleuriſy, left me the ſole Heireſs of a conſiderable Fortune.

My Mother was ſo griev'd for the loſs of my Brother, that I thought ſhe would never have ſurviv'd him. I offer'd her all the Conſolation that I could give her, and might have bin a comfort to her, would ſhe but have done me that juſtice that would have made me capable of being ſo; but I endeavour'd in vain to perſuade her, that ſhe ſhould regain in me what ſhe had loſt in my Brother: She had the ſame Sentiments of me as formerly; whether it were, that ſhe imagin'd her former Harſhneſs to me would not permit me to love her, or that ſhe ſtill continu'd her malicious Inclinations to ruin me.

The change of my Fortune was ſo much the more acceptable, as being that which I the leaſt expected.

pected. The first thing then that I did in this same Exaltation of my Fortune, was to bethink my self of a way to make Madam *Laval* some satisfaction for the Obligations she had laid upon me. I reconcil'd her to her Husband, to whom I lent a considerable Sum of Money to buy an Employment in the King's Houshold; but he liv'd not long in his new Advancement. After that, I would have provided an advantageous Settlement for Mrs. *Laval*; but she testifi'd so great a desire to live with me, that I consented to it; so much the rather, because I was assur'd of her Sincerity, and that she had a more then ordinary love for me.

While I was giving these demonstrations of my Gratitude, the World, accustom'd to empoyson all my Actions, fail'd not to give out, that I had procur'd an Employment for Mrs. *Laval*'s Husband for no other reason, but because I was in love with him. But I shall not need to say any thing in contradiction to such an irrational Calumny.

As for *St. Albe*, I had still a passionate love for him; and I answer'd the marks of Tenderness which he continually gave me, as much as Decency and Decorum would permit me. It may well be thought that the change of my Fortune was no small pleasure to him: And I must confess, that when I found my self my own Mistress, I repented that I had oblig'd him to marry; I should have bin overjoy'd to have made him a Sharer with me in my Estate. 'Tis true, he was not my Equal in Quality, nor rich enough to pretend to marry me; but what he had done for me, and the respect with which he had always accompany'd his Passion, made me believe that there was no Person but he in the World who was worthy of me; but there was no ground for me to give him any such hope. On the

other ſide, I thought, that if I gave him an occaſion for the leaſt Preſumption, it would but ſerve to augment his Misfortune, and create in his Breaſt a greater contempt of his Wife: Therefore I reſolv'd to conceal from him more then ever the Sentiments of kindneſs which I had for him. I paid him exactly what I thought was due to him, and in my Turn offering to him my Eſtate to be wholly at his Service, I deſir'd him to allow me an opportunity to teſtify my Gratitude to him. But at the ſame time I conjur'd him to uſe all his Endeavours to ſtifle a Paſſion, which would but only ſerve to render him unhappy.

He lov'd me with ſo much delicacy, that he durſt not contradict the Reſolution which I ſeem'd to have taken to forget him: How unwilling ſoever he was to receive the Money which I ſent him, he only accepted it for fear of diſpleaſing me; and fearing leſt the outward marks of his Love ſhould prove at length offenſive to me, he took a Reſolution to diſſemble it as much as he could, and conſenting to my Reſolution neither to ſee him, nor admit his Viſits; he only ſent me word that his Love ſhould laſt as long as he liv'd, but that he would never give me an occaſion to complain of him.

This Submiſſion of his, render'd him ſtill more dear to me; and if it were my grief that I could not do for him what I would, it was my equal joy that I had in him a Lover who was proof againſt all Trials.

There are but few Women, perhaps, who are capable of containing themſelves within thoſe bounds which I preſcribe my ſelf; perhaps, becauſe they know not how to reliſh what is moſt exquiſite in the pleaſure of being belov'd. For my part I am

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of opinion, that a Woman may diſpoſe of her Love with her Duty, yet have nothing to upbraid her ſelf for ſo doing.

Soon after the Death of my Husband I had ſeveral conſiderable Matches propunded to me by ſeveral People. However, what I had ſuffer'd during my firſt Nuptials, or rather my love for *St. Albe*, made me reject all their Propoſals.

Then no body made any ſcruple of keeping me company, or of profeſſing themſelves to be my Friends. For I was rich, and my Wealth had quite defac'd the remembrance of whatever had bin invented to my ruin. Then I underſtood the humour of the World: They who had the moſt defam'd me, were the firſt that ſought my Acquaintance; and ſwore that they never gave credit to the Stories publiſh'd by my Enemies. But I was nothing dazl'd with this Change; I knew ſtill how to diſtinguiſh People that had bin kind to me in my Miſery, from thoſe that only flatter'd my Abundance.

The Affairs wherein the Death of my Husband had involv'd me, oblig'd me to take a Journey into the Province, where my ſtay was longer then I expected: And paſſing through *Lyons*, I underſtood that the Duke of *Candale* lay there ſo deſperately ſick, that he was quite giv'n over. Touch'd with this News, and forgetting then the Reaſons which I had to believe him none of my Friends, I only remember'd what he had done for me, and I thought it my duty to offer him my Service in the Condition he was in. So ſoon as he perceiv'd me, he could not forbear asking me pardon for not having ſent to me in ſo long time; and he told me, ſighing, that it had bin his misfortune not to know his Real Friends. I anſwer'd him, that I would

freely pardon him what was paſt, provided he would but ſtrive to recover his Health. He repli'd, he was ſenſible he ſhould dye, but that he was glad that Death had given him ſo much time as to aſſure me, that he always had a greater eſteem for me then for any other Woman. After that, he told me what Women he had lov'd; and I perceiv'd I was not the only Woman to whom he had prov'd inconſtant. Oh! if I might but live a little longer, cri'd he, I would make known to the World, that there are Women both of merit and vertue; and my Example ſhould undeceive all thoſe who are the cauſe of the Injuries that are done 'em. I could not forbear weeping, ſeeing him perſuaded that he was going to dye: He alſo wept himſelf; and our Tears made People believe that there had bin a mutual Amour between us.

Thus what I did out of meer gratitude for the Duke of *Candale*, turn'd to the prejudice of my Reputation after a ſtrange manner. So true it is, that when a Woman is unfortunate, ſhe cannot do a good Action, which ſhall not be conſter'd in a bad Senſe. For preſently it was ſpread abroad, that I had bin driven out of the Duke of *Candale*'s Chamber as an Object that terrifi'd his Conſcience. But what will not People ſay, when they have a mind to defame a Woman! However, I was little mov'd with theſe Rumours. For becauſe I was not conſcious of what they laid to my Charge, I thought it my duty to neglect 'em. Nor was it a wonder that I was not more cautius for the future then I had bin till that time. My Innocence hinder'd me ſtill from keeping a guard upon my ſelf, and was the firſt cauſe of the Attacks that were made upon my Reputation. I ſhould have bin more ſtudious of outward Appearances, had my Deſires bin more irregular.

irregular. But Hypocriſy and Grimace ſeem'd to me the moſt unworthy of all Vices: I was ignorant how much People have need of 'em in their Converſation in this World.

I met in the Province a Lady whoſe Misfortunes had render'd her no leſs illuſtrious then my ſelf: And becauſe I undertook to write theſe Memoirs for no other reaſon then to prove that People are frequently miſtak'n in the judgments which they make concerning Women, I thought it proper in this Place to relate the Story of this Lady, by which it will be ſeen how deceitful outward Shews are; and I ſhall ſet it down in the following words, as ſhe repeated it her ſelf.

When the Duke of *Beaufort*, ſaid ſhe, firſt made his Applications to me, I was ambitious enough to wiſh him for my Husband; and I flatter'd my ſelf with thoſe hopes, becauſe he gave me ſome reaſon ſo to do. The Duke of *Nemours* his Brother in-Law, at the ſame time alſo teſtifi'd a very great Paſſion for me; and doubtleſs I had had a greater love for the Duke of *Nemours*, but he was marri'd, and I was too proud to hearken to a Lover who could not be my Husband. Therefore I gave an ear to the Duke of *Beaufort*, and endeavour'd to ſeparate him from the Duke of *Nemours*. Now it was the leſs known that either the one or the other courted me, becauſe all People were perſuaded that they were otherwiſe engag'd; nor was it believ'd they had any other Quarrels then ſuch as frequently divided the whole Court, and of which the two Ladies, with whom they ſeem'd to be in love, were the occaſion. The Duke of *Beaufort* alſo promis'd to marry me, ſo ſoon as he had brought about a Deſign which he had in his head, and which he imparted to me.

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The Promiſe of a Match ſo advantageous, augmented my Pride, and made me carry my ſelf more ſtately toward the Duke of *Nemour*; but I made it my buſineſs to humour the Duke of *Beaufort*. The Duke of *Nemours* had too great a conceit of his Merit, and too much Wit not to unravel the reaſon of my preferring his Brother before him. Nevertheleſs it made him mad, to have the meaneſt ſhare in my Affection; and he endeavour'd to infuſe into me a contempt of his Rival. But notwithſtanding all the unpleaſing Portraitures he gave of him, I ſtill continu'd my compliance with the Duke of *Beaufort*.

The Duke of *Nemours* was ſo enrag'd at this, that ſeeing he could not put me out of conceit with his Rival, he reſolv'd to make his Rival have an ill opinion of me. Therefore he inform'd him by a Perſon ſuſpected to neither, that I betrav'd him, and that the Duke of *Nemours* ſpent whole Nights with me.

The Duke of *Beaufort* took no notice of any thing to my ſelf, but reſolv'd to have me carefully watch'd. On the other ſide, the Duke of *Nemours*, who made no queſtion but his Brother-in-Law would ſet Sentinels enow upon me, dream'd of nothing elſe but how he might procure a Witneſs that would ſwear he ſaw him enter my Chamber in the Night; and at length he gain'd one of my Servants, who left open a low Window that look't into the Street; and through that Window it was that the Duke of *Nemours* enter'd, at ſuch a time when he was ſure to be obſerv'd by the Duke of *Beaufort*'s Spies.

This Adventure was not long kept ſecret, but was publiſh'd the next Morning; and all the while I knew nothing of it. And indeed what care, what caution can be ſufficient againſt Adventures of this nature! What Woman can promiſe her ſelf to be exempt

exempt from diſgrace, when there needs no more then an Enemy or a Lover to ſatisfy his Revenge upon her.

But when I underſtood what had paſt, I went to the Duke of *Beaufort* to ask him the reaſon of ſpreading ſuch a Scandal. He anſwer'd me, that I knew better then any body; that it was no Calumny, becauſe his Rival had bin ſeen to go in and come out of my Lodging but the Night before. Upon that I made ſuch a Hubub in my Houſe that I diſcover'd the Truth. I ſent for the Duke of *Beaufort* to come to me; he came; and the Lacquey who had bin brib'd, confeſs'd the whole truth before him, ſo that at length he began to believe, or elſe he made a ſhew of believing I was innocent. I told him farther, that I was not ſatisfi'd with thoſe Proofs, but that I would give him others yet more convincing, by obliging the Duke of *Nemours* to diſown the thing himſelf. But the Duke deſir'd me to forget the Adventure, aſſuring me that he deſir'd no other ſatisfaction, and that he was fully convinc'd of my Innocence.

However, I ſaw no other way to reſtore my Reputation to its firſt integrity, but my marrying the Duke of *Beaufort*: But I ſoon perceiv'd he had flatter'd me with falſe hopes; he abated his Sedulities, and inſenſibly forbore to viſit me. And to juſtify this change of his mind, he wrote me word, that during the Agitations of his Fortune, he could not think of marrying. So that I plainly ſaw, I was no longer to reck'n upon him. I muſt confeſs, it was no great trouble to me to forget him, becauſe I never lov'd him. However, I was vex'd he had eſcap'd me; and therefore not caring to live any longer at *Paris*, I retir'd into my Province. Where, while I remain'd in my own Signiory, which as you well

well know, borders upon the Duke of *Savoy*'s Territories, another Adventure befel me.

One Evening word was brought me, that two Gentlemen, having loſt their way in following ſome Chaſe or other, deſir'd to know whether I would be ſo courteous as to afford 'em a Lodging till the next day, in regard it was late, and they being quite tir'd, it was impoſſible for 'em to ride any farther. The Perſon that ſpoke for 'em would not tell me their Names; only he aſſur'd me, they were Perſons of Quality, and that I would not repent me of the kindneſs I did 'em.

I had with me a Lady, one of my intimate Friends, and an old Gentleman, who was nearly related to me. I was alſo at a ſtand, whether it became me to entertain Gentlemen who refus'd to let me know who they were: But when they appear'd, I found ſuch an Aire of Nobleneſs in their Faces, and they requeſted me to lodge 'em with ſuch a graceful demeanour, that I could not refuſe 'em. Theſe two Perſons were the Duke of *Savoy*, and the Marquiſs of *Fleuri*, who under pretence of having loſt their way, came out of curioſity to ſee me.

The Duke of *Savoy* had for a long time an earneſt deſire to be acquainted with me. He had ſeen my Picture, among others of the Ladies of the Court of *France* that had been ſent him; and in regard he was an Amorous Prince, who took delight in Adventures, underſtanding that I liv'd in a Caſtle bordering upon his Dominions, his Curioſity led him to give me a Viſit, in company with the Marqueſs of *Fleuri*.

The Duke of *Savoy*, who was unwilling to diſcover himſelf to any body but only to me, that he might not loſe time, made a ſign to the Marquiſs to

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engage in a diſcourſe with the Old Gentleman, and the Lady, my Friend, while he kept me in diſcourſe: And then ſo ſoon as he could ſpeak without being heard by any body but my ſelf, Madam, ſaid He, you ſee a Prince, who for above theſe two years has had ſo great a Paſſion for you, which has made him forget his Quality, that he might have the Honour of ſeeing you. I am the Duke of *Savoy*; but I do not ground my Hopes of gaining your Favour ſo much upon my Quality, as upon the moſt tender and paſſionate Love that ever was pledg'd to Woman-kind. While he was thus talking to me, I kept my Eyes attentively fix'd upon him: A ſort of ſurprize which he perceiving, and afraid leſt I ſhould interrupt him, tho it were onely to ſhew the aſtoniſhment I was in, he earneſtly deſir'd me not to diſcloſe it to others that He had diſcover'd himſelf; and after a World of Amorous Ejaculations, he preſs'd me to tell him what Impreſſion they had made upon my Heart.

But I was not over-haſty to let him underſtand my Sentiments; I perceiv'd in my ſelf an Inclination for the Marqueſs of *Fleuri*, before I knew who he was; and I was ſorry that I had ſhewn any thing of Complacency to the Duke of *Savoy*, becauſe I foreſaw he would prove an Obſtacle to my growing Paſſion: In ſhort, I was already more in love then I could imagin my ſelf to be. Inſtead of anſwering to the Duke of *Savoy*'s Amorous Importunities, I ask'd him with a kind of unſeaſonable Tranſport, the Name of the Perſon that accompany'd him; but immediately repenting that I had bin ſo fooliſh to put ſuch a Queſtion to him, I fell into a ſort of Rambling Gibberiſh, that put the Duke into a fit of Laughter. However, he attributed

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the little Ramblings of my Expreſſions to the Diſorder of my Mind, and ſtill preſs'd to know what he was to hope for. By which time, having a little recollected my ſelf from the Agitations that turmoyl'd my ſurprized Thoughts, I told him, I could not think my ſelf any way oblig'd to him for a ſeeming Honour that ſo much expos'd my Reputation. He laught at my niceneſs in point of Reputation; and told me, that the thing which he requir'd from a Woman that he lov'd, was, that ſhe would lay aſide that part of Delicacy. Upon this Subject we had a long diſcourſe, and our Converſation ended in many earneſt Invitations, which he made me, to the Court of *Savoy*.

The Marqueſs *de Fleuri*, as my Friend afterwards told me, was under a ſtrange diſturbance all the while that the Duke of *Savoy* was talking to me; and ſhe could perceive, I was a Perſon who had made no ſmall Impreſſion in his Breaſt. Therefore, before we parted, the Marquiſs took his Opportunity, and whiſpering me in the Ear, *Madam*, ſaid He, *I ſhall dye if you ſurrender to the Duke of* Savoy *a Heart which I alone deſerve, becauſe of that Infinite Love which I have for you.* He was unwilling to ſay more to me, for fear of being obſerv'd; and I muſt confeſs, it was my happineſs that I could not have time to diſcourſe him in private; for I ſhould have had much ado to have conceal'd from him the Joy which the aſſurance of his Love infus'd into me; conſidering how little we are Miſtreſſes of our ſelves in the firſt Agitations of a violent Paſſion. At the ſame time the Duke of *Savoy* deſir'd leave that he might tarry the next day alſo at my Houſe; which the Pleaſure of the Marquiſs *de Fleuri*'s Company, and the Hopes of underſtanding who he was, eaſily prevail'd upon me to grant.

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When my Friend the Lady and I were alone together, I gave her an account of the Converſation I had had with the Duke of *Savoy*; but ſaid not a word to her of my Inclinations for the Marquis *de Fleuri*: Not, that I diſtruſted the Sincerity of her Friendſhip; but becauſe Secrecy is always the firſt thing that inſpires us with a Real Paſſion. My Friend would hardly believe me at firſt, when I told her that one of the Perſons was the Duke of *Savoy*; but fully at length convinc'd, ſhe blam'd me for conſenting to let 'em tarry all the next day. She foreſaw better then I did, the Conſequences of this Adventure; and told me moreover, that if it ſhould come to be known, the Higher the Duke of *Savoy*'s Quality was, the more my Reputation would ſuffer. I aſſur'd her, that he ſhould never have any occaſion to boaſt of any thing that could do me an Injury, and that I did not find in my ſelf the leaſt Inclination for him. We ſpent all that night in diſcourſing of this Adventure, not being able in all that time to think of diſcloſing to her my Sentiments for the Marquiſs *de Fleuri*; a fault for which I have often ſince that time deſervedly blam'd my ſelf; for a Woman has never more need of the Counſel and Advice of a prudent and diſcerning Friend, then when a Paſſion begins to blind her. When ſhe thinks to be her own Conductreſs, ſhe makes a thouſand falſe Steps, and falls into a thouſand miſtakes.

Thus then, conſulting no body but my ſelf, I reſolv'd upon two things that were ill contriv'd, yet which at the ſame time ſeem'd to give me an occaſion to ſatisfy both my Inclination and my Vertue. I took a Reſolution not to let the Marquiſs *de Fleuri* underſtand the Sentiments I had for him, nor to diſcourage the Duke of *Savoy*, that I might not

not be depriv'd of the Marquiſs's Company. This Deſign appear'd to me Heroic; beſides, that it concern'd me to try whether the Marquiſs lov'd me really or no; and I thought there was no better way to convince my ſelf of this Truth, then by making a ſhew of having a greater Fondneſs for the Duke of *Savoy* then I had. The next day I put my project in Execution; as being onely civil and complaiſant to the Duke of *Savoy*, and carefully avoiding to diſcourſe or caſt my Eye upon the Marquis *de Fleuri*.

As for the Duke of *Savoy*, whoſe love for me, was one of thoſe ſorts of Paſſions, that never languiſh by degrees, but ſeek a ſpeedy ſatisfaction; he was ſo charm'd with my converſe and diſpoſition, that without any more ado, he propos'd to me what his Paſſion made him deſire. On the other ſide, I who had a deſign to manage him, return'd him no ſuch Anſwer as I ſhould have done; ſo that he thought there was now no more to be done, but to find an Opportunity that we might be both in Private together. He diſſembl'd therefore, and having made me promiſe him to take a Journey into *Savoy*, he took his leave of me, and I believ'd him really gone. The Marquis of *Fleuri* endeavour'd in vain to ſpeak to me before they took horſe, for I ſtill avoided him; ſo that all he could do, was to ſlip a Billet-Doux into my hand, which I had not the Power to refuſe; and therefore, ſo ſoon as they were out of ſight, I open'd it in great haſte, and found the following words.

Nothing but an Affection for you as violent as mine, could force me to betray the Duke of Savoy, *by giving you notice that he is this night to be let into your Chamber. Your Converſation has flatter'd him; but ſince I have found*

found you worthy of my love, I cannot believe you give to his ſo much Encouragement.

The Marquis of *Fleuri*'s Merit was too well known, and I had had ſuch an advantageous Relation made of it, that I was over-joy'd when I underſtood 'twas He that lov'd me no leſs paſſionately then I did him already. However his Billet put me into a great perplexity, ſo that I thought at firſt to have ſhewn it to my Friend; but in regard I was unwilling ſhe ſhould underſtand the Sentiments which the Marquiſs had for me, I only told her what I had heard of the Duke's Reſolution. She lay'd before me, that I had done ill to flatter the Paſſion of that Prince, and ask'd me what was my Intention? I anſwer'd her, that I ſaw no likelihood that he could put his Deſign in execution; however, that I would break his Meaſures, by keeping her all Night in my Company, and giving order that no body ſhould be let into the Caſtle. But ſhe advis'd me to take another courſe, and to ſpend the Night among the Ladies in the Neighbourhood. But alas, I could not reliſh that Advice; for the hope of the Marquiſs's Company over-rul'd me to ſtay at home, and there expect the iſſue of the Adventure. And I thought that ſtanding upon my guard would be enough to ſecure my Reputation.

After I had given all ſuch Orders as I thought neceſſary to fruſtrate the Duke's Enterprize, I retir'd betimes in company with my Friend. I thought that after ſuch Precautions as I had taken, there could be no fear of the Duke of *Savoy*: But I had to do with a Prince ſufficiently ingenious to bring about his Amorous Deſigns. One of my Women whom he had brib'd, had let him in betimes into the Caſtle, and lockt him up in my Wardrobe.

The Marquiſs of *Fleuri* was alſo hid in one of the Courts, where being diſcover'd by one of my People, there was preſently a loud Cry of *Thieves*; all my Servants were immediately in Arms, and they had certainly kill'd him, if my Friend and I, ſo ſoon as we heard the noiſe, had not immediately ran down to his reſcue. By that means we ſav'd the Marquiſs's Life. In the mean time the Duke of *Savoy* enter'd my Chamber: But in regard I was now aſſur'd of his being in the Caſtle, I did not return to my Chamber without my female Friend, in company with the Old Gentleman and the Marquiſs.

The Duke of *Savoy* ſeeing his Deſign diſcover'd, ſhew'd himſelf; and I flew out in bitter Language againſt him; but he did but laugh at me; and ordering the Marquiſs of *Fleuri* to follow him, he left the Caſtle before day. On the other ſide, I was vext to the Soul at the Marquiſs's departure; and methought I perceiv'd ſo much affliction in his Countenance for the ſame Reaſon, that I was about to have ſtopt him.

Some days after I receiv'd a Letter, wherein he ſent me word, that he lov'd me above all Women, though he could not queſtion but that I lov'd the Duke of *Savoy* as well. But then the vexation which the Marquiſs of *Fleuri*'s Letter gave me, made me ſenſible that I lov'd him more and more: Yet I could not underſtand why he ſhould be ſo poſitive that I lov'd the Duke of *Savoy*. Thereupon I recall'd to mind all that I had ſaid, and all that I had done, that could manifeſt any ſuch Inclination for that Prince; and not being able to live in that uncertainty wherein I was, I took a Reſolution to go to the Court of *Savoy*.

I never

I never examin'd whether or no my Deſign was contrary to my Honour, and I ſhut my Eyes againſt whatever could divert me from it; and only liſtning to my Love, made haſt to be gone.

The Duke of *Savoy* was ſurpriz'd at my Arrival; for he never expected to ſee me at *Turin*, conſidering what had paſt. But being one who lov'd to flatter himſelf, he thought I had repented of having us'd him no better, and imagin'd that the motive of my Journey was out of a deſign to pleaſe him.

The Marquiſs of *Fleuri* was jealous of the ſame thing; and was mortally perplex'd at it; but whether it were to make himſelf amends for his loſs, or to be reveng'd upon his Rival, he made all his Applications to a Perſon for whom the Duke ſeem'd to have a very great Affection. This was a young Lady of *Bretagne*, whoſe Name and Adventures are known to all the World. So that when I had taken a journey into *Savoy* for the ſake only of the Marquis of *Fleuri*, he was labouring to forget me, and lov'd another.

I ſpar'd for nothing of Bravery to make a ſhew: Wherein I follow'd my natural Inclination to Luſter and Expence. This made a cry at Court, that all my Finery was at the Duke's Charge, and the Marquis was carri'd away with the common Opinion: And this Opinion advanc'd his Affairs with his Miſtreſs. For a fancy took her in the head, that the Duke of *Savoy* had an affection for me: And judging by the preſent what he might hereafter do for me, ſhe liſten'd to the Marquis of *Fleuri*'s Addreſſes.

I undeceiv'd her Royal Highneſs, who had ſuffer'd her ſelf to be prepoſſeſs'd as well as others: And giving her a faithful account of what had paſs'd be-

tween the Duke and my ſelf, my Sincerity pleas'd her, and ſhe was pleas'd to honour me with her Friendſhip.

My heart however could not be at reſt: The Marquiſs of *Fleury* ſeem'd to ſhun me in all places: I knew of his Intriegue with the Lady of *Bretagne*; nor was the Duke of *Savoy* ignorant of it.

One day alſo diſcourſing with me about it, he told me, I was the cauſe he ſuffer'd unreveng'd the Affront which the Marquiſs had put upon him; and that I might judge by that, that he intended to have no other Miſtreſs but my ſelf. I diſcover'd to him ſome part of my Sentiments, which no way ſatisfi'd him; and I lay'd before him the injuſtice which the Marquiſs did him, and that in honour it became him not to relinquiſh to another, a Perſon whom he had once lov'd: And Jealouſy infus'd into me a wonderful Eloquence. The Duke of *Savoy* alſo could not but perceive how much I was concern'd in the injury which the Marquis did him: For according to the manner that I talk'd to him, it might be eaſily perceiv'd that I was more offended at it then the Duke.

But as much taken up with the Perſon whom he admir'd as the Marquiſs was, he could not but obſerve, that I had little kindneſs for the Duke: And the love which he had once had for me, and which was not quite extinguiſh'd, made him keep a ſtrict watch upon the Motions of that Prince; and he perceiv'd that the Duke was ill ſatisfi'd with me, and that I avoided him with care. This was the reaſon that he forbore to ſhun me, and that I had a ſuddain opportunity to diſcourſe him. He talk'd to me of his Suſpicions; I undeceiv'd him; and my joy to find that he ſtill lov'd me, would not permit me to conceal from him the affection I had for him.

Nor

Nor did he make an ill uſe of his Information: Never was a violent Paſſion accompany'd with more reſpect. I deſir'd him to be contented with the Aſſurance which I gave him that he was belov'd, and conjur'd him to be careful of my Reputation. I met with a Character in him far different from that of other men, who believe they have a right to be rude and uncivil with a Woman whom Scandal has not ſpar'd. Quite the contrary, the Marquiſs told me, that he would do himſelf the kindneſs to convince me by a reſpectful adherence, how much he was aſſur'd that I deſerv'd a better Reputation; and begg'd my permiſſion to do me that Service in publick, as to perſuade the World into the ſame Opinion he himſelf had of me. Which demeanour of his appear'd to me ſo noble, and ſo generous, that I could not refuſe him what he requeſted; and from that time forward he began to redouble his Addreſſes to me, as to a Woman that he intended to marry. For I flatter'd him with hopes that I would marry him, though it were not my deſign: And perhaps I may be blam'd for putting him in hopes of a thing which I never intended to do. I will not deny but that there was ſomething of Treachery in it on my part: But one Conſideration which ſome People perhaps will cenſure for Chymerical, would not permit me to think of ſuch a Match. I foreſaw, that ſo ſoon as the Marquiſs of *Fleuri* ſhould marry me, there would have bin thoſe who would have laid before him, with a world of aggravation, the Stories that render'd my Conduct ſuſpected in *France*. And I was afraid, that his Paſſion being ſatisfi'd, would have bin rambling after other Objects, while I muſt have bin the forſaken Monument of his extinguiſh'd

Love. And I look'd upon the expiration of his Love as the greateſt Misfortune that could befal me. This was the Reaſon that prevail'd with me againſt that Match: Now that which oblig'd me to put him in hopes of marrying me, was this. I imagin'd that nothing could be more for my Honour, nor more conduce to the re eſtabliſhment of my Reputation, then to ſee a man of his Merit, and his Delicacy, make me the only Subject of his Addreſſes, and judge me worthy to be his Wife, when ſo many People ſeem'd to take delight in ſcandalizing me for a Woman that had neither vertue nor government of her ſelf. I thought it lawful for me to make uſe of ſuch an occaſion to recover my Honour.

The Marquiſs of *Fleuri*'s Conſtancy to me provok'd the Duke of *Savoy*, and drew upon me the hatred of the Damſel of *Bretagne*. She had bin already jealous of the Duke of *Savoy*'s Sedulities to me; but the Marquiſs of *Fleuri*'s Inconſtancy offended her Vanity to that degree, that ſhe reſolv'd to be reveng'd both of me and him. To this purpoſe ſhe reconcil'd her ſelf to the Duke of *Savoy*, whoſe Levity ſhe manag'd ſo well, that ſhe eaſily accompliſh'd what ſhe undertook.

The Duke of *Savoy* ſoon after ſent the Marquiſs of *Fleuri* to the Court of *France*: And though we ſaw that this Employment was only a pretence to part us, yet there was no remedy but Obedience.

However, I was not ſo ſenſibly diſpleas'd at this ſame Separation as I ſhould have bin, had we not bin both in hopes to meet each other again at *Lion*, where the King and the Duke, with both their Courts, were to be toward the end of the Year.

Book the Sixth.

THE Duke of *Savoy*, after he had thus remov'd the Marquis of *Fleuri*, minded nothing more then to lay ſuch a Snare for me, as might either put him into a Condition to triumph over me, or elſe give him an occaſion to revenge himſelf upon the Marquis by defaming my Conduct.

The Damſel of *Bretagne* and I became very good Friends upon the Aſſurances I gave her, that I never had bin engag'd in any Intreague with the Duke of *Savoy*. She begg'd my pardon for being jealous of me; and becauſe it concern'd me that the Duke ſhould court her more then evr he had done, I did my utmoſt to preſerve a good underſtanding between 'em, and by a perſuaſion of bad Policy, permitted the Duke to viſit her at my Lodging. Thither ſhe came frequently, and there it was that the Duke met her as often. Nor did the Report, that the Duke came thither for my ſake, much trouble me, becauſe it was well known that I never was with him but in the Damſel's company: Beſides that, I thought him quite eſtrang'd from me, while he was ſo paſſionate a Lover of his Miſtreſs. However, the Report continu'd that he was ſtill a zealous Servant of mine; and there were People that ſent the Marquiſs of *Fleuri* word, that the Duke was never from my Lodging, and that we were both engag'd together in a familiarity which began to make a noiſe. This Rumour renew'd his firſt Jealouſies; he wrote to me therefore in ſuch terms, as plainly

ſhew'd him to be perſuaded that I was not cautious enough of my own Reputation, or his Delicacy, and earneſtly deſir'd me to find out a way to avoid the Duke's coming any more to my Lodging. 'Twas in vain to lay before him the Reaſons I had to permit him; there was a neceſſity that for his ſatisfaction I muſt break off the Duke's Viſits.

To that purpoſe I faign'd my ſelf ſick, and affected Privacy: But it was ſaid, that all whatever I ſhould do would turn to the prejudice of my Reputation: And they who made it their buſineſs to defame me, made their Comments upon my Sickneſs, and gave out that I was with Child. In *Savoy* 'twas ſaid, that the Marquiſs of *Fleuri* had done my Buſineſs; but into *France* they ſent him word, that it was by the Duke of *Savoy*. There were alſo ſome People who pretended to know the truth from my own Servants; and perhaps there might be ſome one among 'em who might undertake to ſupport this falſe Report: For frequently our Servants are our moſt dangerous Enemies.

When I underſtood what the World ſaid of me, I ſhew'd my ſelf, to undeceive ſuch Perſons as had too lightly given credit to the Scandal; and People of Senſe were undeceiv'd. But in regard there are ſome who will ſooner believe the worſt then the beſt, there were others gave out I had miſcarri'd; and others looking upon things according to their prepoſſeſſion, pretended to diſcover in my Countenance and my Gate ſeveral ſigns of that Impoſture; yet I was never better in health, never lookt better then I did at that time.

But the moſt pernicious Effect of this Calumny was not what was reported in *Savoy*, but what was believ'd in *Paris*. The Marquiſs of *Fleuri* was fully perſuaded of the truth of it, and wrote to me to

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the ſame purpoſe. Upon the receit of his Letter I was not a little nettl'd and imbitter'd againſt him: His giving credit to ſuch Reports with ſo much eaſineſs, render'd him ſo different to me from what he always had bin, that I repented of having thrown away my Love upon him: And then it was that I found by experience, that Abſence operates more ways then one to the prejudice of Love. This begat a little coldneſs between us, and we forbore writing one to another. He that will undertake to love a Woman, ought to have a ſtrong Head, more eſpecially when the Perſon upon whom he deſires to place his Eſteem, has the misfortune to have Enemies. For I believe there is no man ſtrong enough upon that account, ſince the Marquiſs of *Fleuri*, who was a man of the beſt Character that ever I knew, was ſo weak as to believe whatever Tales and Stories reach'd his Ears.

Theſe Scandals and Reproaches pleas'd the Duke of *Savoy*, as much as the Marquiſs of *Fleuri* was vext to hear 'em; and thereby 'twas eaſy to underſtand the difference of their Love.

The Duke of *Savoy*, who had only a Roughhewn Paſſion for me, ne'er laid my Defamations to heart: Nay, he rather believ'd it would be no hard matter to win a Woman who had little Reputation to be cautious of. For this is that which happens but too frequently: There are few Women, when the greateſt part of their Honour is ſacrific'd, make any ſcruple to offer up the remainder. On the other ſide, the Marquis of *Fleuri*, who never lov'd me but becauſe he thought I had not merited my Misfortunes, was at his wits end to have the leaſt reaſon to queſtion my Innocence; his Love not being able to ſupport it ſelf without Eſteem, which was the foundation of it, he valu'd not a Heart accuſtom'd to ſurrender.

At

At the ſame time the Marquiſs of *Cah*—— fell in love with the Damſelf of *Bretagne*, which was a Match of great Advantage for her; and in regard the Duke of *Savoy* had a deſire to beſtow her, he deſir'd me that I would be pleas'd to viſit her ſometimes, and to accompany her when the Marquiſs propos'd to carry her abroad: He alſo deſir'd me to ſpeak to the Marquiſs *de Cah*—— in favour of his Miſtreſs; which I did with that ſucceſs, that he marry'd her within a year or two after.

One day the Duke of *Savoy* propos'd the taking of a Tour by Water upon the *Poe*; where I was preſent with all the Court. In our return, it was perceiv'd that the Barge which carri'd us began to leake: And preſently the Duke of *Savoy* order'd us to be ſet aſhore, where Coaches were ready to receive us, and carry us to *Turin*, from whence we were not above a League, and Night drawing on. I know not by what Enchantment, thinking to have taken Coach with the Marquiſs of *Cah*—— and his Miſtreſs, I miſtook, and put my ſelf into another, which drove away like Lightning, and wherein I found my ſelf alone with a ſingle Perſon whom I knew ſoon after to be the Duke of *Savoy*. I was ſufficiently vext that it ſhould be ſaid I return'd alone with the Duke; but I had juſter cauſe ſoon after to be more afflicted. The Wheel of our Coach broke, as the Duke himſelf had taken order, and we were forc'd to alight, as Fortune, or rather Deſign would have it, near a Houſe which belong'd to the Marquiſs of *Fleuri*, and which flew open to us as ſoon as the Duke's Name was heard. It ſeems, 'twas no new thing in that Principality to ſee the Duke engage himſelf in ſuch Adventures, and never was Prince leſs ſhie of publick Diſcourſe upon that ſcore. I made no ſcruple to enter the Houſe, believing the

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other Coaches had follow'd us; but they had taken another Road, and I was all alone with the Duke of *Savoy*. However, I thought to meet with Company in the Houſe; and when I underſtood that it belong'd to the Marquis of *Fleuri*, I flatter'd my ſelf that no Misfortune could befall me, and that in the Houſe of ſo dear a Lover I ſhould be nimble and cunning enough to defend my ſelf from any Affront that his Rival could put upon me. Hardly were we enter'd, when a certain Perſon arriv'd; you will ſcarcely believe it, when I ſhall tell you it was the Marquiſs of *Fleuri*, ſeeing I have told ye that he was in *France*: However, it was He, and you ſhall hear the reaſon why he return'd.

Receiving no Letters from me, and being no leſs able to perſuade himſelf to write to me, he took a Reſolution to come and ſatisfy his Curioſity and his Jealouſies upon the Place it ſelf; for he lov'd me really, and was at his Wit's-end that he could not be aſſur'd of my Vertue. Nor was it a hard matter for him to take this Journey, becauſe the Court of *France* was then removing to *Lion*; and therefore taking his advantage of theſe Circumſtances, he took Poſt and came to his Houſe with a deſign to remain there *Incognito*, and not to make known his return to any but thoſe by whom he intended to inform himſelf of the truth of things.

He arriv'd almoſt as ſoon as We; and the Houſe-keeper telling him that the Duke of *Savoy* was but juſt come before with a Lady, his thoughts miſgave him preſently that 'twas my ſelf. He was at a ſtand whether or no he ſhould conceal himſelf, when the Duke who was deſirous to know who he was, perceiv'd him; and preſently taking notice of him, ask'd him why he was not in *France*, and wherefore he was return'd without his Order. The Marquiſs

quiſs, in his own excuſe made anſwer, that his Negotiations being at an end, he thought he might be permitted to leave a Place where he had nothing more to do.

The Duke of *Savoy*, who deſpair'd not all this while to vanquiſh my Reluctancy, commanded the Marquis to go and ſtay for him at *Turin*, as being unwilling he ſhould ſee me in his Company. Thereupon the Marquis made a ſhew of yielding him Obedience, tho having more exactly inform'd himſelf who the Lady was that the Duke of *Savoy* had brought along with him, he underſtood it was my ſelf. But then it was that he minded little the Diſobeying of his Prince, provided he could but convince himſelf by his own Eyes of what he had bin long doubtful, and in ſome meaſure perſwaded. Now in regard he was better acquainted then any Body with the Apartiments of his own Houſe, he hid himſelf in a Cloſet, where he could hear and ſee what was done in the Chamber where we were together.

Nothing could have fallen out more to my Advantage; for the Marquis *de Fleuri* was a witneſs how courſely I handl'd the Duke of *Savoy*; and his Eſteem for my Vertue reſtor'd me to his Heart, and made him lay aſide all his Jealouſies. In the mean time the Duke preſs'd me to correſpond with his Paſſion, and he urg'd his Importunities to that degree, that the Marquis thought it no longer became him to conceal himſelf, but that it was time to ſuccour me in that diſtreſs. He appear'd then, and never conſidering that he expos'd himſelf by ſo doing to his Ruin, he enter'd the Chamber where we were, and approaching the Duke with a world of Reſpect, he beſought him to be pleas'd that he might afford me the Succour which I implor'd.

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The Duke laid his hand upon his Sword, and had I not interpos'd between, he had certainly kill'd the Marquis; which he might have eaſily done, becauſe he neither offer'd to defend himſelf, nor to avoid the Duke's fury by flight. However the Duke's wrath was not appeas'd by the Marquis's Submiſſion; he confin'd him to his Houſe, and forbid him to ſtir from thence till further Order; I alſo underwent the Duke's Reſentment; for he ſent me back to *Turin*, and told me 'twas his Pleaſure I ſhould appear no more at Court; and ſo taking Horſe he rode a private way to *Turin*.

Report and Scandal would have never ſpar'd me, had it bin known that I had bin alone with the Duke; but I was ſufficiently beſpatter'd the next day; for then it was known that the Duke and the Marquis had had a Rancounter. It was reported that I had given the Marquis a Meeting, and that the Duke would never have minded coming back alone with me, had it not bin to break the meaſures which the Marquis and I had taken to meet one another.

All this while, I muſt do the Duke that Juſtice, that he was always an Enemy to Violence; and that he had not been ſo rude with me, but that he thought me to be of the Humour of thoſe Women who would have that torn from them which they moſt eagerly deſire to part with. So that whatever was violent in the Duke of *Savoy*'s Behaviour was only to be attributed to the misfortune of my Reputation. He might have manag'd me better, had he bin better acquainted with my Humour, and had he not built too much upon the Opinion he had of my former Intrigues.

The next day he came to ſee me, and having made me a thouſand Excuſes, deſir'd me to appear again at Court. And as for the Marquis of

Fleuri,

Fleuri, he requeſted me in reſpect of him, not to take it amiſs, that he continu'd in his confinement forſome few days, for returning without his Order. But the Marquis of *Fleuri*, who did not believe he ſhould come off at ſo cheap a rate, was not to be found when they ſought for him, neither did any Body know what was become of him

Though I was a little ſurpriz'd that he had not found a way to ſend me word where he was, yet was I not much diſturb'd at it; but rather glad that he had betaken himſelf to flight, becauſe I imagin'd he was return'd into *France*, whither I was ſuddenly to follow him. In ſhort, I departed with the Court of *Savoy* in a little time after, and we came to *Lions*, where the Court of *France* was expected in a day or two.

The Marquis of *Fleuri* had bin in that City *incognito*, ever ſince what had paſt in his own Houſe; and now he was no longer jealous; nay, the ſame adventure ſeem'd to have given a new vigour to his Paſſion; he frequently came to ſee me; but becauſe I was afraid leaſt he ſhould be diſcover'd, I perſwaded him to bethink himſelf of reconciling himſelf to the Duke of *Savoy*; which I thought it might be no difficult thing to do at a time when that Prince had nothing but Divertiſement in his thoughts; and it is true that there never were ſeen ſo many Paſtimes and Divertiſements as while the two Courts remain'd at *Lions*.

The Marquis told me that he knew but one aſſured means to appeaſe the Duke of *Savoy*, which was for me to marry him. Thereupon he call'd to my remembrance the hopes I had given him to that purpoſe, and preſs'd me with ſo much Importunity no longer to delay a Thing that would reſtore him to his Maſter's favour, and make him

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perfectly happy, that I had not the power to let him underſtand my reſolution never to be his Wife. I only told him I did not think he could regain the Duke's Confidence by ſuch a Marriage, becauſe his Highneſs lov'd me ſtill too well, to let me chooſe for a Husband a perſon with whom he thought he had juſt reaſon to be offended.

The Marquis *de Fleuri* was too Amorous to be ſatisfy'd with that Excuſe, and upbraided me with want of Affection for him. But then I told him frankly that I would never marry him, becauſe I fear'd that Marriage would abate his Love. He could not reliſh ſo exquiſite a Piece of Delicacy; and therefore thinking my mind alter'd, he began to revile me, and intermixt his Taunts with a little too much bitterneſs. That diſpleas'd me, and I found there was too much unpoliteneſs and Intereſt in his Love. I was at my Wits end, that he had not ſo much Delicacy as my ſelf; and out of a ſtrange and fantaſtick Humour not eaſie to be comprehended, the more I lov'd him, the more reaſon I thought I had to be diſſatisfy'd with him. Fain would I, that it would have contented him to be aſſur'd, that I gave him in my heart a Precedency above all other men, and that he had bin as apprehenſive as I, of what I imagin'd would one day deſtroy ſo fair a Union.

In the mean time it was known that the Marquis of *Fleuri* was at *Lion*, and that he viſited me every day. And I know not whether he were in hopes to engage me to marry him, by giving out that we were already marry'd; but ſuch a Report was ſpread about, and I underſtood that he was Author of it.

The Duke of *Savoy* alſo ſpoke to me about it, and upbraided me for not having inform'd him

how

how nearly I was concern'd in the Marquis of *Fleuri*'s Fortune; and proteſted to me that ſince he was my Husband, he would not only pardon him for what was paſt, but that he would endeavour by his Favours to render my Reſidence in *Piemont* acceptable to me. I aſſur'd the Duke that there was no ſuch thing as a Marriage, but I beſought him to reſtore the Marquis to his Confidence. This Requeſt made his R. Highneſs believe that I had ſome reaſons to keep my Marriage private. He therefore ſent for the Marquis, and reſtor'd him to his Familiarity. Thereupon, ſo ſoon as I ſaw the Marquis of *Fleuri*, I chid him for not undeceiving the Duke in his opinion of our being marry'd; and I told him that I took it very ill that he himſelf had ſpread abroad the Report of it. He did not at all deny it, but deſir'd me to forgive a fault which he thought neceſſary to reconcile him to the Duke his Maſter. Afterwards he gave me an Account, after what manner the Duke had reſtor'd him to his friendſhip, and made that an Argument that I could have no longer any reaſon which could hinder me from Marrying him. I return'd him the ſame Anſwers I had done when he urg'd me to give him my conſent; but ſeeing me ſtedfaſt in my determination not to marry him, he flew out into ſuch a violent Paſſion that I could not have thought him guilty of, and told me, that he began to think that whatever had been ſaid of me was true. I was ſo ſenſible of that Affront, that in the height of my Anger which it had infus'd into me, I forbid him to ſee me any more. With that he flung out of the Room, and I was more provok'd at his obedience, then I was with his injurious Language; for his manner of leaving me, made me judge that it would be no difficult thing for him to forſake my Company. I ne-

I never had ſuch violent pangs of Grief as then; but at length I recover'd my Courage and Reſolutions; and whatever paſſion I felt for the Marquiſs, I ſcorn'd to recall him agen. Thus we ſhould always be Miſtriſſes of our Paſſions, were we not too much in love with 'em.

In the mean time, the Marquiſs of *Fleuri*, after he had left me, took poſt, and went I know not whither. And they that were my former Scandalizers took no compaſſion upon me on that occaſion. But I made uſe of the old Remedy, Patience, and leaving both the Courts at *Lyon*, return'd to my own Territories, reſolv'd to comfort my ſelf for the loſs of a Perſon who had not delicacy enough to be contented with my heart. For if I had not the advantage to bring the Marquiſs to my Sentiments, I had at leaſt the conſolation not to have bin ſo weak as to conform to his.

The Lady who recounted this Story to me, told me an infinite number of other Adventures that had befallen her; and while I tarri'd in the Province, we often made thoſe Reflexions together, which her Deſtiny and mine gave us an occaſion to make upon the Misfortunes of Women.

After I had put an end to thoſe Affairs which detain'd me in the Province, I return'd to *Paris*. There the Baron *de Sareelles*, who was my Kinſman, came to ſee me ſo ſoon as I was arriv'd, and gave me to underſtand, that during my abſence he had made a particular Acquaintance with *St. Albe* and his Wife; that he gave frequent Viſits to both; and in ſhort, that he had liſted himſelf in the number of their Friends. He told me farther, that Madam *St. Albe* had charg'd him to make a perfect reconciliation between her and I; that ſhe was abſolutely undeceiv'd in every thing that had bin infus'd into

her concerning my familiarity with her Husband; that she most earnestly desir'd to give me cause to forget what was past, and to become one of my Friends. As for *St. Albe*, I had heard no tidings of him all the while I stay'd in the Province: And though I was fully convinc'd that he durst not write to me for fear of displeasing me, yet I was troubl'd that I could hear nothing of him.

I persuaded my self that *Sarcelles* spoke to me after that manner by *St. Albe*'s Order, who had brought his Wife to hear Reason, and had advis'd her to be Friends with me, that he might recover the lost advantage of my Society. I lov'd *St. Albe* too well to deny my consent to a Reconciliation that flatter'd him with so much delight. And besides, I was glad to find his Wife reduc'd to Reason, and that she sought my friendship: So I told *Sarcelles*, that I would willingly wait upon her, and that he might carry me to her when she pleas'd. Nor did he delay to bring us together; at what time we talk'd of nothing that was past; nor did any thing fall from me, during our whole discourse, that could give her an occasion to recollect her memory: and when she went about to talk of any thing to that purpose, I always interrupted her; and because she loaded me with her Caresses, I imagin'd that she lov'd me in good earnest. I ask'd her for her Husband; she told me, he was in the Country, and that he would not return in three Weeks. I durst not ask any more particular Questions; but I made no doubt but that when he should come to know that I had visited his Wife, he would write to me, and hasten his return; nevertheless, I heard no news concerning him. I repay'd Madam *de St. Albe* her Visit, who after that came frequently to see me, always bringing *Sarcelles* along with her, which made me believe

lieve 'em to be good Friends, but I little ſuſpected 'em to be in that familiar league together as they were.

St. Albe return'd by this time out of the Country, but was not very haſty to come and ſee me; which very much diſturb'd me; but becauſe I thought he would not preſume to viſit me without leave, I went to his Houſe, two days after I underſtood he was come home. He was then with his Wife, but receiv'd me coldly; nor did he ſay one word to me how joyful he was that I ſhould become a frequent Viſitant of his Wife, which I expected from him. I obſerv'd however in his Eyes, that ſtill he lov'd me, and that it was with great conſtraint upon himſelf that he forbore to let me know how glad he was to ſee me again. He ſeem'd to me to be ſad, and I ſaw that he was diſſatisfi'd: However, I ſaid not a word to him in his Wife's preſence; but having giv'n him my Hand to lead me to my Coach, Well, Sir, ſaid I, how like ye Madam *St. Albe*'s Diſcourſe in reference to me? Is not this a wonderful Change? If outward Shews may be believ'd, I am apt to think ſhe loves me with all her heart. *St. Albe* return'd no Anſwer. Upon which, why ſo ſilent? ſaid I. You cannot but know the cauſe, repli'd he; I am troubl'd, Madam, that you have ſo eaſily done for *Sarcelles* what you have ſo often refus'd to do for me. How ſo, repli'd I, was it not you that perſuaded Madam *St. Albe* to be reconcil'd to me? Upon thoſe words he ſmil'd, and told me, I could not be ignorant of the Motive that induc'd her to that Reconciliation. The Place would not permit us time ſufficient to clear this Myſtery; for had I kept him longer, it would have bred ſuſpicion; and therefore I only deſir'd him to come to me the next day and unfold this Riddle; telling him withal, that I ſhould

not take him for my Friend, if he did not releaſe me from the trouble I was in. He promis'd to obey me; and ſo I left him for that time, not knowing what to think of the Story.

So ſoon as I came to my Lodging, I told Madam *Laval* what I had heard and ſeen, and we thought we had divin'd the cauſe of *St. Albe*'s Melancholy. But he came the next day and unfolded it himſelf. I am no more a Viſionary, ſaid he, nor a Jealous Shallow-brains then another; nor do I love Madam *St. Albe* ſo well as to be alarum'd at her private Familiarities. But I love you, Madam, with a delicacy that renders me ſenſible of your Honour. All the World believes that *Sarcelles* courts my Wife, and that you are the Manager of their Private Conjunctions.

This Complaint of *St. Albe* touch'd me to the quick: I ask'd him whether he could accuſe me of ſo foul a piece of Treachery? No, Madam, repli'd *St. Albe*, though I had ſome reaſon to wonder at firſt, that you ſhould viſit my Wife at *Sarcelles*'s requeſt, a Perſon whom I hate, and whom I had ere now full dearly made repent of his Inſolence, but for the honour which he has to be your Kinſman, yet I did you juſtice without delay. I thought you were impos'd upon by the Artifices which they us'd to draw ye to my Houſe, and I thought that your Compliance proceeded only from your Civility and your Natural Goodneſs. Do you believe, ſaid I, haſtily interrupting, that I had no other Motive— and ſo ſaying, I bluſh'd, and fix'd a more tender look upon him then ever I had done, while he beheld me in the ſame manner, and both ſtood ſpeechleſs for a time. Yes, Madam, repli'd *St. Albe* at length, though you have always bin ſo cruel to make me ſenſible of your indifferency for me, I was

left

leſs troubl'd to imagin with my ſelf that you ſought ſee me again, then to believe you capable of Malice or Blindneſs. As for Malice, ſaid I, I never had any; but I think I have bin a little too blind; and I would have you be convinc'd, that 'twas my deſire to ſee you again that was the cauſe of my Blindneſs. For, in ſhort, *St. Albe*, I knew your Merit to the full, nor could I be inſenſible of ſo many Teſtimonies of your Friendſhip, as you have giv'n me. I thought, added I, it had bin you your ſelf who had perſuaded Madam *St. Albe* to deſire my company: I ſaw nothing in her Conduct with *Sarcelles* that gave me any cauſe of ſuſpicion, and I am apt to believe that nothing criminal paſſes between 'em. *St. Albe* took no notice of my laſt words; he only minded to aſſure himſelf of the ſincerity of my Sentiments for himſelf; and though he could not doubt but that I lov'd him, yet was it the firſt time I ever diſclos'd my Sentiments to him. Nor did I repent that I had let him underſtand 'em: He accompany'd with ſo much reſpect the Joy and Tranſports which the aſſurance of my Love infus'd into him, that he ſtill appear'd to me more worthy of my love: And I believe there would be little reaſon to upbraid Women for being ſo weak as to let men know they love 'em, if all Lovers were as reſpectful and as delicate as *St. Albe*.

After he had a hunderd times renew'd his Oaths to be eternally mine, and to exact no other recompence of his love, then the pleaſure of loving me, and being by me belov'd, I put him again upon the Story of *Sarcelles*, and he told me, that he had bin for a long time a Sedulous Courtier of his Wife, inſomuch that it had bin the talk of the Town, and that *Sarcelles* and his Wife foreſeeing that his Patience might at length be tir'd, they bethought them-

themſelves that the only way to preſerve their Union, was to draw me to Madam *St. Albe*'s Houſe, becauſe that *St. Albe* being ſtill in love with me, the pleaſure of my Company would make him amends for the trouble that *Sarcelles* gave him.

I found much probability in *St. Albe*'s Relation, and that put us into new Confuſions: For I could not forbear viſiting Madam *St. Albe* without depriving my ſelf of her Husband's Company, and exaſperating her a ſecond time againſt me: On the other ſide, I could not continue my Viſits without blaſting my Reputation in the World. I underſtood alſo that Publick Report had begun to beſpatter me already, by giving out upon my renewing my Viſits to Madam *St. Albe*, that we acted all four by concert; and that *St. Albe* for the pleaſure of my company had proſtituted his Wife to *Sarcelles*.

This Report appear'd ſo injurious to my own, and the Reputation of *St. Albe*, that for the more ſpeedy ſtifling it, I reſolv'd neither to viſit *St. Albe* nor his Wife any more.

St Albe had too great a value for my Honour, and was too ſenſible of his own, to diſapprove my Deſign: But becauſe it was too great a trouble to us to want the company of one another, there was an Expedient found out, that I ſhould refrain for ſome time from viſiting Madam *St. Albe*, and that during that time I ſhould oblige *Sarcelles* to carry himſelf with more caution.

But this turn'd alſo to my prejudice: For in regard it was known how coldly *St. Albe* had receiv'd me, and that the Viſit was not known which he paid me the next day, 'twas reported abroad that I forbore to ſee his Wife, becauſe the Husband had found it out that I favour'd *Sarcelles*'s Deſigns. Which made People believe that I lov'd *St. Albe* bet-

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ter then he did me; and I was lookt upon as a Woman that never minded any thing elſe, provided I might but ſatisfy my own Paſſion. However, I deſerv'd a better Reputation; and I believ'd that few Women would have had the courage that I had, to refrain the Company of a Perſon I lov'd, when I had ſo favourable an opportunity to ſee him every day.

About the ſame time Madam *St. Albe* fell ſick, and notwithſtanding all the Remedies that could be adminiſter'd to her, ſhe dy'd of the Small Pox. Her Death ruin'd *St. Albe*, who having no Children by her, was oblig'd to reſtore what ſhe brought him: And becauſe he had bin no good Husband of his own Eſtate, he was forc'd to deſpoil himſelf of all he had to ſatisfy his Wife's Heirs: So that he fell from a Plentiful Eſtate into great Poverty.

It was now ſome time ago that the Dutcheſs of *Chatillon* had propos'd to marry me to the Duke of —— who was a Widower, and who had a Daughter much about the Age of my Son. The Duke alſo agreed, if the Match went on, that my Son ſhould marry his Daughter, which was a very advantageous Match for my Son, and which I ought not to have refus'd, had it bin only becauſe Madam *de Chatillon* propos'd it: But I could not reſolve to marry agen; not that the Experimented Vexations of my firſt Marriage made me afraid to venture, but the Eſteem and Affection I had for *St. Albe*. Nevertheleſs, becauſe I could not foreſee the death of his Wife, I had accepted the Civil Propoſals of Madam *de Chatillon*, and could give no other Reaſon to put off my Marriage, but the tender years of my Son.

Madam *de St. Albe* dy'd juſt at the ſame time that Madam *de Chatillon* preſt me to forbear inſiſting

upon that Reaſon. But *St. Albe* being a Widower, I thought it became me not to marry any other; and that which before was only an effect of my Paſſion, was now a Reaſon of Generoſity. I was rich, and he was poor; I thought I could not in juſtice refuſe to relieve him, and I knew no way to afford him a more noble Relief, nor more comformable to my Inclination, then to marry him. This was the real Motive which engag'd me in a Deſign which has bin ſo much blam'd by thoſe who accus'd me of only conſulting a blind Paſſion. But to juſtify my ſelf from this Reproach, I ſhall give an Account of the manner how our Marriage came to be concluded, by which it will be the better ſeen how worthy *St. Albe* was of the Advantage he met with in marrying me. Any other Woman, had ſhe bin in my place, would have done as I did: For I dare be bold to ſay, there are Women ſtill who have noble Sentiments, and they who believe they act only out of humour or interſt, are not acquainted with 'em.

When *St. Albe*, after the loſs of his Wife, ſaw himſelf reduc'd to loſe the beſt Eſtate which he enjoy'd, there was nothing talk'd of about the Town but my Marriage with the Duke of—— and whether *St. Albe* apprehended that the Match was too too much for my advantage for him to endeavour to perſuade me againſt it; whether really he did not believe I lov'd him ſo well as to preſer him before the Duke of ——— or laſtly, whether he were aſham'd to find himſelf without an Eſtate, he left *Paris*, and withdrew to ſome Remainder of his own, which when he had ſold, he deſign'd to go for *Holland*, and ſeek for ſome Employment in that Country. As for my own part, I had ſeen him but once ſince the death of his Wife; and though I had

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taken a Resolution to marry him, I had not said a word to him of it; I only offer'd him what Money he stood in need of to redeem his Estate. He had thankt me for my Offers, but would not accept 'em: Two days after which, he left the Town, and I knew not for some time what was become of him; when at last, after much Expectation, I receiv'd the following Letter.

The LETTER.

I Thought it proper, Madam, to inform ye, that I am quite discharg'd from the Heirs of Madam de St. Albe. *If I made no use of the Assistance you had the goodness to offer me toward the conclusion of that Affair, be assur'd, it was not out of my fear of being burthensome to ye, nor of being beholding to you. I know the generosity of your Soul; but I did not think it convenient to accept your Favours at a time when Fortune offer'd you an Advancement to Title and Dignity in the World, if any such there be that may be thought equal to your merit. I must always love ye however, but suffer me to conceal my Destiny from ye, till your Marriage is accomplish'd. Never enquire, or trouble your self, whether I shall be happy or miserable: Whatever be my Lot, I shall be truly happy, when I know that you enjoy your full content.*

Upon the reading this Letter, I felt my self turmoil'd with various Sentiments. At first I was charm'd with *St. Albe*'s Generosity: Then I accus'd him of loving me too little, since he gave me my Liberty with such a seeming unconcern'dness. Methought his Letter did not become a tender Lover, and a little thing would have made me deem him inconstant. But at length, I knew him too well to continue long those sinister thoughts of his Affection,

ction, and I made this judgment of him, That he lov'd me ſo much the more, the more reſolv'd he appear'd to ſacrifice himſelf for my ſake.

Thereupon I ſent away a Meſſenger with a Billet, wherein I earneſtly deſir'd him to return to *Paris*, having ſomething of importance to impart to him; and for the more ſpeed, I order'd the Meſſenger to take Poſt. He found him ready to go for *Holland*; but not being able to withſtand my Orders, he laid aſide thoſe Thoughts, and return'd immediately to *Paris*.

Book the Seventh.

IN the mean time, Madam *de Chatillon* was ſo importunate with me to conclude my own, and my Son's Marriage, that I thought it my Duty no longer to dally with her. I told her therefore, that for my own part I was fully reſolv'd not to marry; only if ſhe could ſo bring it to paſs that my Son might marry the Duke's Daughter, the Obligation ſhe would lay upon me, would be ſtill the ſame. But ſhe told me, the Duke would never conſent to the Marriage of my Son, unleſs he married me firſt. To which I anſwer'd, that if it were ſo, there was no farther thinking either of the One or the Other. Upon which Madam *de Chatillon* upbraided me with having little Affection for my Son, ſince he would never meet with a Match ſo Advantageous as the Duke's Daughter. But I repli'd, that my Son was too young to think of Marriage, and that I had no mind to ſacrifice my Liberty and Repoſe to his Intereſts. I ſee now, ſaid Madam *de Chatillon*, that you intend to marry *St. Albe*. Which words ſhe utter'd in ſuch a Tone, as hinder'd me at firſt from acknowledging it to be my real deſign. If you marry him, added ſhe, you will commit a great piece of Folly: It is a Match that will be univerſally condemn'd; and beſides, I am afraid 'tis a *Match of Inclination*. Afterwards ſhe laid before me the Inconveniences that would attend it. Notwithſtanding all this, becauſe it was my Intereſt that Madam *de Chatillon* ſhould approve my Reſolution to

marry

marry *St. Albe*, I gave her ſuch a Portraiture of the Man as did not diſpleaſe her; and when I ſhew'd her his laſt Letter, ſhe alter'd her mind. After ſhe had read it, ſhe told me, that ſhe piti'd *St. Albe*, and that ſhe would not adviſe me to abandon him to his deſpair.

You may eaſily judge how joyful I was to ſee that Madam *de Chatillon* approv'd my Deſign. What a pleaſure it is to be applauded in our Wiſhes and Deſires! After that, I made no ſcruple to diſcover my heart to a Friend who confirm'd me in my Sentiments. I acknowledg'd to her that I had refus'd the Duke for no other reaſon, but only becauſe I was reſolv'd to marry *St. Albe*; that I was mov'd with his ill Fortune; and that after what he had done for me, I lookt upon it as a piece of Treachery and Ingratitude to forſake him. Madam *de Chatillon* commended my Generoſity, and promis'd to ſerve me as far as lay in her power; but ſhe told me withal, that my Marriage was to be kept ſecret; and I reſign'd all my Concerns into her hands. Then ſend *St. Albe* to my Houſe, repli'd ſhe; 'tis requiſite that I ſhould talk with him firſt, and that I ſhould fully underſtand him, before I acquaint him with his Happineſs: For if he reſembles other Men, I would never adviſe ye to marry him. 'Tis neceſſary, that before you make him your Husband, you ſhould be ſure; that you may have nothing to tax your ſelf with afterwards; and that you know whether he can make you ſo happy as you expect.

I was glad that Madam *de Chatillon* was pleas'd to take upon her the trouble; well aſſur'd that *St. Albe* would appear to her the ſame that ſhe would have him to be; and beſides, I was not ſorry that any other but my ſelf ſhould prepare him for a Happineſs which he ſo little expected. It came into my mind

mind alſo, that while Madam *de Chatillon* took upon her this Affair, I might be able to ſay, that 'twas She who had advis'd me to it. And I deſir'd no more then to be able to clear my ſelf from every thing that might be objected againſt my Conduct in this reſpect.

After I parted with Madam *de Chatillon*, I met with *St. Albe*, who tarried for me at my Lodging. I told him, that I could not but diſapprove a ſcrupulous Niceneſs, that would not ſuffer him to be beholding to me; that I knew the Condition of his Affairs, and that I had thought of a way to ſet him up again, of which Madam *de Chatillon* would tell him more; that what we had deſign'd to do for him would be no Obſtacle to my Marriage with the Duke of ——— At which laſt words *St. Albe* immediately chang'd Colour —— Alas, Madam, ſaid he, why have you ſent for me back? for in your preſence that ſtrength fails me which I had remote from your ſight. Go to Madam *de Chatillon*, ſaid I, ſhe will revive your Courage. Which ſaid, I would not permit him to ſpeak any more, but ſent him away. I muſt confeſs however, that had he ſtay'd but never ſo little longer, I ſhould not have had the power to have conceal'd my Intentions from him. For I was nothing ſcrupulous of my Sentiments ſince Madam *de Chatillon* approv'd 'em.

The next day *St. Albe* went to wait upon Madam *de Chatillon*, who ſhewing him the laſt Letter which he had written to me, and which ſhe had then in her own Cuſtody; What was your Deſign, ſaid ſhe, in writing this Letter? Confeſs the truth, did not you believe it would have wrought with the Marchioneſs to have broke off her Marriage with the Duke of ——— ? For if it were true that you approv'd that Marriage, you would have left her

her to conclude it without saying any thing. I will not dissemble with you, added she; for it is manifest by this Letter, that you did fancy to your self ridiculous hopes, and that you imagin'd that for love of you, a match so much to her advantage would have bin broken off. Is it possible that you should so little understand your self, or that you should be ignorant how impossible it is for my Friend to marry you? This Lecture put *St. Albe* quite out of Countenance, who after a silence for some time, Madam, said He, what is there so Criminal in that Letter? or where have I given Demonstrations of those vain Hopes for which you blame me? Never dissemble, reply'd Madam *de Chatillon*, you love the Marchioness, you believe her to be in love with you, and you would have her marry ye? Who I! Madam——answer'd *St. Albe*; No——Madam——so far from it, that were it her desire, I would be the first tooppose it. I have too high a value for her Honour, to allow that she should prefer an Unfortunate Beggar, who has nothing but an Honest Heart, before a Person that is going to exalt her to that Illustrious degree which she deserves above any Person in the World. I am glad, said Madam *Chatillon*, to hear ye confirm what you have writ to her; for I must not conceal it from you, that the Marchioness would hardly be induc'd to marry the Duke of — did she not believe you to be so just a Person as to consent to it: you have been already too badly us'd by Fortune, to be loaded with more sorrows; 'twas her pleasure therefore, I should see you, that I might prepare you for this Marriage; and to shew you that you are still in her thoughts, she is resolv'd to give or lend you forty Thousand Crowns to set you up in the World again; with this you must be content, and I must

tell

tell you, few Women would have been ſo generous. But this is not all, ſhe and I have conſulted together, and we have ſome thoughts of helping you to a Wife; and it will be your fault if you do not marry a handſome Lady that will bring you a fair Fortune. If you love the Marchioneſs, you will promiſe me to accept of this Match. This is that you muſt reſolve upon, nor ſhall you ſtir from hence, till you have promis'd to marry the perſon that we recommend to your Affection. I promiſe you, Madam, whatever may contribute to render the Marchioneſs happy. I marry'd once already for the Love of her; and you may aſſure her, that in loving her I ne're conceiv'd the leaſt vain hope of what you ſeem'd to intimate: I only made my happineſs conſiſt in loving her, and I will always love her. You would talk at another rate, reply'd Madam *Chatillon*, interrupting him, were you her Husband: believe me, Wedlock alters the ſtrongeſt Inclinations; and were the Marchioneſs inclin'd to marry ye, I would perſwade her to the contrary, for fear leſt Wedlock ſhould have the ſame effect upon you. Wherefore, Madam, cry'd *St. Albe*, does your Ladiſhip take ſuch delight in tormenting, by ſoothing me with thoſe Idea's with which I never flatter'd my ſelf? I will amuſe ye then no longer, reply'd the Dutcheſs, the Marchioneſs intends to marry ye. She is an unwary Woman, who in ſo doing follows her own Inclination, never conſidering to what Extremities this Marriage will expoſe her. But I hope that you will be more diſcreet than ſhe; and that 'tis none of your deſire that ſhe ſhould render her ſelf ridiculous to all the Kingdom. *St. Albe*, upon thoſe words, beheld the Dutcheſs with an awful ſilence, and perceiving ſhe had done, Madam, ſaid he, I cannot

not think you ſerious in your Diſcourſe: I never flater'd my ſelf that the Marchioneſs had ſo much inclination for me, as you would ſeem to perſwade me: but if it be true, that her deſign is the ſame which you mention, I am aſſur'd that the infinite Reſpect and Love which I ſhall have for her till the ſeparation of Death, will juſtifie her Choice; and that there is no Body that will cenſure her for marrying the only perſon who at all times did juſtice to her merit; I lov'd her as ſoon as I ſaw her; from that very time I never ceas'd to adore her; and the love which I have for her has bin always ſtedfaſt and permanent. Can it be poſſible, added he, tranſported with Delight, and throwing himſelf at Madam *de Chatillon*'s Feet, that the Marchioneſs ſhould have any ſuch deſign as that wherewith you bleſs my Ears? Oh Madam, in the Name of God, I beſeech ye never to oppoſe it. If you love her, you ought to deſire her happineſs: I dare preſume to ſay, that I am the only perſon who can make her happy.—Here his Tears ſtop'd him, and would not permit him to ſay more. Madam *de Chatillon* alſo felt her ſelf wholly vanquiſh'd; and raiſing him from the ground, No, ſaid ſhe, I ſhall never oppoſe your Union; ſhe can alſo tell ye, that 'twas I who confirm'd her in her reſolution to marry ye. And I can farther aſſure ye, that if ſhe does not marry you, ſhe will never be Wife to any other Perſon.

In what an Extaſie of Delight and Satisfaction was over-joy'd *St. Albe*, when he heard ſuch Confirmations of his Felicity as theſe! He embrac'd the Dutcheſſes Knees, conjuring her at the ſame time to deal ſincerely with him. Madam *de Chatillon* anſwer'd him, that to let him ſee, ſhe did not deceive him, ſhe would ſend for me; which ſhe did,

did, and I as ſoon repair'd to her Lodgings, impatient to know what had paſt between 'em, where *St. Albe* was ſtill upon his Knees when I entred the Room. 'Tis well y'are come, Madam, ſaid ſhe, for I know not what to do; and if you do not take ſome ſpeedy care, I'm afraid *St. Albe* will die at my Feet. I knew not what the Dutcheſs had ſaid to him, and therefore ſeeing him in that condition, I was afraid ſhe had put him into a fit of deſpair, by telling him that I intended to marry the Duke of——. Scar'd with theſe thoughts, Ah, Madam, ſaid I, you have bin too cruel to put the poor *St. Albe* in pain—— and to *St. Albe*, cry'd I, What has ſhe told ye, that ſo terribly afflicts ye?——Then turning to me, and embracing my Knees in the ſame manner,——No, Madam, cry'd he, I cannot believe what I have heard——my happineſs is ſo unconceivable, that it aſtoniſhes me. I was then afraid leſt Madam *de Chatillon* had told him too much; and bluſhing, I askt him, what happineſs it was had ſo tranſported him? Alas, Madam, reply'd he, I am not able to expreſs it; all that I am ſenſible of is only this, that I adore ye; I wiſh that you could read it in my heart. I find then, reply'd I, that Madam *de Chatillon* has betray'd me, and 'tis in vain to diſſemble any longer. Riſe, *St. Albe*, and hearken to me; I love you; and all that you have done for me for theſe dozen years together has convinc'd me that you merit my Affection. I never thought that the Diſpoſal of Providence would order things in ſuch a manner as to teſtifie the impreſſion which your Accompliſhments have made in my heart. I muſt alſo tell ye farther, that tho we are now in a fair way both you and I to a laſting Union, I ſhould hardly have reſolv'd upon it, had not your misfortunes depriv'd ye of your Eſtate. But now you

have need of me, and no body ſhall have the advantage of being beneficial to your wants. You reliev'd me at a time when my Fortune was low, and it is but juſt I ſhould repay you what you have done for me. I intend to marry ye; but I build ſo much upon your Friendſhip and your Delicacy as to believe that you will do nothing but what ſhall ſuit with my Honour. Before we marry, we muſt break off with the Duke of —— and endeavour the Settlement of my Son. I require ye therefore to keep ſecret my diſcover'd intentions, and that you rarely viſit me till I have prepar'd all things ready for our Wedding. I hope it will be ſuddenly, and that you will continue ſuch a Conduct as ſhall make me more and more approve the promiſe I have made ye to be always yours. Oh, Madam, 'tis too much, reply'd *St. Albe*; you ſhall find me uncapable of change; nor ſhall ever time abate the ſincerity of my Sentiments. God is my witneſs, that if you had eſpous'd the Duke of——I never would have ceas'd to love you. My Reſolution was fixt; I was going into *Holland*, not to extinguiſh my ſorrows to ſee you in the Embraces of another, but to conceal a bad Fortune from your Eyes, that would have always bin ſolliciting your Generoſity.

After this Converſe which laſted for ſome time, we conſider'd which way to break off with the Duke of——. To which purpoſe we agreed that *St. Albe* ſhould return into the Province, till we were in a condition to marry. He obey'd; and departed the ſame day; Madam *de Chatillon* then confeſs'd, that ſhe had a value for *St. Albe*, and that he was worthy the Happineſs which I put him in hopes of, and therefore advis'd me to conclude the Buſineſs as ſoon as might be. On the other ſide I deſir'd

ſir'd Madam *de Chatillon* to tell the Duke of —— that I was unwilling to keep him in ſuſpence, and therefore whatever Honour his Courtſhip did me, that I had no deſire to marry. Nor was he much troubl'd at my Reſolution, becauſe he had ſome reaſons on his ſide to break off with me.

My Mother, who was ſtill my Enemy, tho ſhe were arriv'd at thoſe years that ought to have ſlacken'd her hatred, was mad to hear that I was going to marry the Duke of ——. And therefore ſhe ſet all her Springs at work to hinder my Advancement to a degree above hers: and fill'd the Duke full of Suſpitions and Jealouſies of my Behaviour. I know not where ſhe had bin inform'd that I had lately ſeen *St. Albe*; but ſhe told the Duke that I had carry'd on an intrigue for twelve years together with *St. Albe*, and that I met him frequently in private. The Reſpect I owe the Memory of my Mother will not permit me to accuſe her of having invented ſeveral horrid Circumſtances to ſet out the Story of that Amorous intrigue to the Duke: But in ſhort, her malice went ſo high as to give out, that *St. Albe* had Poiſon'd his Wife, that he might be free to marry me.

The Duke of —— knowing that *I* intended to break off with him, never ſtrove to conceal any of theſe Circumſtances from Madam *de Chatillon*, who acquainted me with 'em. But as for the Scandal invented about the Death of Madam *de St. Albe*, *I* little regarded it, becauſe all the World knew ſhe dy'd of the *Small Pox*; however I was really angry to ſee my Mother ſo diligent to defame me.

I had no ſooner broken off with the Duke of —— but it was preſently reported, that I had marry'd *St. Albe*, and this was the occaſion of a general out-cry againſt me; but this was not the Buſineſs that troubled me.

My Son, who was about seventeen years of age was in love with the Daughter of the Duke of —— and had also won her affection. She was much about his Age; and they were both so sure that they should be married together, that they were both at their Wits end, when they were forbid to see one another. I know not who had taken the pains to insinuate into my Son, that I was so far from seeking his Preferment by matching him with the Daughter of the Duke of —— that I sought to ruin him by marrying a Man not worth a Groat, and my inferiour in Birth; but so it was, that notwithstanding he had always bin to me a dutiful and affectionate Child, his Passion for the Duke's Daughter, or rather his Youth made him hearken to every Tale that was told him; and my Mother laboured to get the Wardship of him taken out of my hands.

This was to me a cutting blow; for I lov'd my Son; and I may safely say that he deserv'd my Love for a thousand Noble Qualities with which he was endu'd. I thought then, there was no time to be lost, and that for my own justification, and to prevent his being taken from me, it behov'd me to propose to the Duke of —— a Match between my Son and his Daughter; I offer'd him also greater advantages then he expected; and I must confess that tho I still design'd to marry *St. Albe*, and might have Children by him, *I* believ'd him a Person so far from seeking his own interest, that I made no question but that he would approve whatever I did for the good of my Son. But the Duke rejected my Proposals, and my Son perceiving 'twas no fault of mine that he did not marry his Daughter, resum'd his former Sentiments, and by degrees forgot his loss.

St. Albe inform'd of what the World reported concerning his being married to me, wrote to me every day, and conjur'd me to bury his intereſts in oblivion, and to forget him himſelf alſo, if he did the leaſt injury to my Honour, or my Sons Advancement. But theſe Sentiments ſerv'd only to render him more dear to me, and made me more impatient to conſummate our Marriage: beſides, I was troubled for his abſence; and though he diſſembl'd the conſtraint he put upon himſelf to ſuffer the loſs of my Company, I was mov'd with his conſtrain'd affliction; and therefore I ſent for him back to *Paris*, reſolv'd to marry him out of hand.

I foreſaw not that there could be any thing more reported of us, after we were marry'd, then what had bin already divulg'd; I found my ſelf under a neceſſity of reſolving to marry him, or to be thought to have carry'd on an Amorous intrigue with him; ſo I rather choſe to be accus'd of being marry'd to him, then to be accounted his Miſtreſs. However, becauſe I was afraid of new Obſtructions from my Relations, I kept a private Wedding; nevertheleſs omitting nothing that was neceſſary to be done, to prevent the ſtarting of any Nullities in my Wedlock. I muſt confeſs that I was troubl'd I could not do things with more luſter; I could not reliſh the Pleaſures of Privacy upon ſuch an Occaſion: for I would fain have let all the World ſee by Marrying *St. Albe* publickly, the eſteem and value I had for him.

However, this private Wedding could not be ſo long kept ſecret, but that without examining the Reaſons I had to marry *St. Albe*, 'twas preſently reported to be an *Inclination* Match. As if the inclinations of Women could never agree with reaſon.

'Tis true, 'twas Paſſion that fix'd my Reſolution to marry *St. Albe*; but I ſaw nothing of ſo much inequality in the Match, that was any way a leſſening to my Honour. He was a Gentleman, and a Perſon of ſingular merit: And I am perſuaded, that had he bin as rich as I, they who blam'd the Marriage moſt of all, would have bin the firſt Adviſers of me to it. For my part, I was not of their Opinions that Eſtate and Fortune are to be the Rules of Wedlock; but on the other ſide, the leſs *St. Albe* was worth, the more I thought my ſelf oblig'd to do things generouſly. But Generoſity is not a Vertue that men imagin we ought to boaſt of when we marry. That Engagement is only lookt upon as a driv'n Bargain, where we are to propoſe nothing to our ſelves but Profit and Intereſt. But I inſiſt too much upon the Juſtification of my Conduct: 'tis enough for me, that my Marriage was approv'd by all thoſe that are endu'd with noble and vertuous Sentiments.

St. Albe was nothing alter'd in his Behaviour after he had marri'd me, but rather redoubl'd his Conſideration and Reſpect for me. I thought my ſelf then going to lead a Life of Happineſs and Tranquillity: But I was not yet arriv'd at the end of my Sorrows. My Marriage being made publick, all the Women, except Madam *de Chatillon*, forſook me, lamenting my ill Conduct: And had you heard 'em, you would have thought they would have more eaſily excus'd a piece of forbidden Galantry then this Lawful Marriage. Such is the Unjuſtice of the World, to judge of things by fantaſtical Conceit and Capriccio. They pardon'd me no more for having married a man that I lov'd, then formerly for having ſought a Separation from a Husband that I could not endure.

The

The Old Count of—— who had ſerv'd me in my former Misfortunes, took my part at Court, and came to viſit me, on purpoſe to give me an Account of the Good Offices he did me, by anſwering thoſe that told Idle Tales and Stories to the Queen concerning my Marriage. At my Houſe he met with Mrs. *Laval*, with whom he enter'd into a long Converſation. She was witty and comely withal; and the Count took a liking to her. He judg'd by her Fidelity, and her conſtant Adherence to me, that a man might be happy in his old Age to have a Woman of her Character; and with theſe, and perhaps ſome other Coſiderations, he return'd the next day, renew'd his Diſcourſe with Mrs. *Laval*, and in eight days after made her a propoſal of marriage: And though he had Children marri'd, yet for her he was a conſiderable Match. For my part, I had ſuch a deſire to ſee Mrs. *Laval* advanc'd to a degree becoming her Merit and her Vertue, that I ſpar'd for nothing to bring about the Match. At length the old Count marri'd her, but kept a private Wedding, and the Marriage being a Secret, his new Wife remain'd at my Houſe; whither while the old Count came every day to her, People began to talk of them, as they did of *St. Albe* and me, when they thought we were not marri'd.

The Count therefore, to ſtop the Mouth of Scandal, declar'd his Marriage, carri'd his Wife, whom henceforward I muſt call the Counteſs of——— to his own Houſe, and caus'd all the Honours to be paid her, that were due to the Wife of a Perſon of his Quality.

Nevertheleſs, the Old Count's Marriage became a Story full of divertiſement; and they who had enur'd their Tongues to Scandal and Calumny, could not forbear talking. They renew'd the Sto-

ries of my paſt Galantries, and fail'd not to bring in the Counteſs of—— for her ſhare, of whom they told a hundred Idle Tales.

I found my ſelf in this manner become a third time a prey to Envy and Reproach. Which when they faſten once upon any Woman, let her Conduct be never ſo void of Offence, ſhe cannot ſhun the Whirrits of their Malice.

The Children of the Count of—— beheld their Father's Marriage with an Evil Eye; and not being able to null it, they endeavour'd at leaſt to poiſon the pleaſure of it. To which purpoſe they maliciouſly order'd Letters to be deliver'd to the Count, wherein they gave him Hypocritical Advertiſements of my irregular Life, and that the Counteſs his Wife was my Companion and Sharer in all my Pleaſures.

The Count, who was a Perſon but of weak Parts, gave credit to thoſe Letters, became jealous, and deſir'd his Wife to ſee me no more. But ſhe refus'd to give him that Satisfaction, convinc'd as ſhe was, that he was in the wrong to require it of her: Withal ſhe conjur'd him to tell her who infus'd into him thoſe vain Suſpicions of my Conduct. Upon that he ſhew'd her the Letters he had receiv'd, and ſhe thought ſhe knew the Hand: ſhe alſo ſhew'd 'em to me, and I found they were written by *Bloſſac*. He was both a Friend and nearly related to the Children of the Count of—— and in regard he was acquainted with my firſt Adventures, it was an eaſy thing for him to make what uſe of 'em he pleas'd, as he had done in thoſe Letters: For there was nothing more lewdly invented, nor more unworthy an honeſt Gentleman, then what he ſent to the Count.

Though

Though I had an Opinion bad enough of *Bloſſac*, yet I did not think he could have bin guilty of ſo much Baſeneſs; nor could I divine any other Reaſon for it, unleſs it were out of deſpight for the deſerved Scorn that I had put upon him. My ſecond Marriage had more incens'd him; whether that he were naturally an Enemy to every thing that was a pleaſure to me, or that in deſpight of his wicked Diſpoſition, he had ſtill pr[illegible]v'd ſome remainders of a paſſion for me. For th[illegible]re ſome People who let looſe their fury againſt a Woman, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe they cannot forbear having an affection for her. They revenge themſelves upon her for the want of merit, which renders 'em deſpicable in her Eyes: Nor do I believe there can be any Enemies more dangerous to the Reputation of Women, then Lovers that cannot gain the reciprocal Affection of their Miſtreſſes.

The Counteſs then, no longer doubting but that the Letters were written by *Bloſſac*, gave her Huſband a deſccription of him, and demanded juſtice of him for the Calumnies thrown upon her. The Count, who was a Man of ſincerity, but ſomewhat of a rude and unpoliſh'd nature, ſwore that if it were *Bloſſac* who had written thoſe Letters, he would force him either to prove his ſoppiſh Tales, or elſe make him eat his words. Preſently the Count went to look for him, and having found him, he ask'd him whether he had writ the Letters which he had receiv'd? But inſtead of returning an Anſwer, *Bloſſac* fell a laughing; and then with the Aire of a Perſon zealous for the Count's Intereſt, he told him, that he had nothing to object againſt his Wife; only he was willing, as his Friend and Servant, to let him know that I was very bad Company, that no body was better acquainted with

with me then he, for that he had formerly bin a ſharer of my Favours; till finding me to be a perfect *Coquette*, he forbore my Company. *Mon. Bloſſac*, ſays the Count, this that you ſay deſerves a ſerious Conſideration: My Wife has told me other things, which no way agree with what you tell me: Come along then, and let us ſee whether you will make good theſe Stories to her Face. *Bloſſac* anſwer'd, that he was not a Perſon that was to be compell'd to give ſuch ſtrict Accounts; that he had done the duty of a Friend to inform him of what he knew; and that he might make what uſe of his kindneſs he pleas'd; if not, he might let it alone. And having ſo ſaid, he would have ſnatch'd the Letters out of the Count's hands; but the Count lifting up his Cane, threaten'd to uſe him like a Raſcal as he was. Upon which *Bloſſac* drew; but he was compell'd to put up his Sword and retire. The Count made a great noiſe about this Adventure; he complain'd alſo to the Queen, and ſoon after *Bloſſac* was committed to the *Baſtille*. But though he appear'd to be guilty enough, I was not lookt upon as innocent. 'Twas believ'd that he was not committed to the *Baſtille* for the Falſhoods written in his Letters, but for having utter'd Truth, which a Civil Gentleman is never allow'd to publiſh. So that all the Ridiculous Stories that had bin ſo often and ſo unjuſtly attributed to me, were renew'd upon occaſion of this Quarrel.

This Tempeſt was no ſooner calm'd, but the Death of my Mother, which happen'd about the ſame time, gave an occaſion for the raiſing of new Batteries againſt my Reputation. Tho all the Eſtate that was at her diſpoſal was but very ſmall, yet ſhe made a Will, by which ſhe diſinherited both me and my Son, and left what ſhe had to a Kinſman

a far

a-far off, a Man that was hardly known in the World. This Kinſman, deſirous to make the beſt of the Will, finding he ſhould be hardly able to make it good, endeavour'd to inſinuate into the Public, that the reaſon why my Mother had diſinherited me, was, becauſe to her certain knowledge, ſhe was aſſur'd that my Son was none of my Huſband's. And for proof of this, he publiſh'd the Reaſons which my Mother had given of her being ſo well aſſur'd; that is to ſay, he reviv'd whatever my Husband had formerly invented to ruin me. All which Scandals had bin ſo often reported, ſo often refuted, that I wonder'd there ſhould be ſtill any People ſo vain as to give themſelves the trouble of renewing 'em. But it is not with Calumny and Reproach, as with other things that diſpleaſe and grow nauſeous with being often repeated. Stories that have bin told a thouſand times over, are ſtill new, when they are reviv'd to the prejudice of another; and there are People who have itching Ears, and who are always ready to liſten to 'em.

Soon after the Count had wedded Madam *Laval*, I married my Son, and at another time it would have bin the greateſt grief to me in the World to have liv'd a-part from two Perſons ſo dear to me; but I had a Husband, the Conſolation of whoſe Company made full amends for thoſe Leſſer Diſquiets. We ſpent the Winters at *Paris*; and when he departed for the Army, I retir'd to one of my Mannors, where I had no greater pleaſure, then to write to him, and receive Letters from him. Three years of my Marriage we ſpent in perfect Union; nothing troubled our Felicity: And in truth, all the honour of ſo happy a Union was due to *St. Albe*. For never did man accompany his tenderneſs with more reſpect and good humour; but men were ne-

ver

ver born to enjoy an uninterrupted and lasting Happiness in this World.

The Mannor where I made my usual Residence, when my Husband was in the Army, adjoin'd to the Estate of a Gentleman whom I must call the Count of *Velley*: A Person whom particular Reasons had oblig'd to quit the Service, and who had purchas'd a considerable Employment in the Province. Now in regard he was not satisfi'd with the Court, he rarely went thither; nevertheless his Business call'd him frequently to *Paris*. This Person, so soon as he had made himself acquainted with *St. Albe* and my self, propos'd to us the letting him have an Apartment in our House at *Paris*. He was a Widower, and had only one Daughter about Eighteen years of Age, whom he had caus'd to be bred up in a Convent. However, *Velley* was yet young enough, well shap'd, and had a great deal of Wit: He was born with so great an Inclination for all sorts of Sciences, and was so studiously addicted to 'em, that he had attain'd to a considerable perfection in 'em: But among all the Good Qualities, he had one very Bad one, which had like to have ruin'd *St. Albe* and my self, and which we never were so curious as to mistrust.

Velley, who could not believe, after all that had bin reported of me in the World, that I was an Enemy to Gallantry, took a fancy to court me. Now in regard I was not sensible of any Inclination for him, I was not offended with the marks which he gave me of his Love; I treated him also after such a manner as made him believe I was not displeas'd with his Courtship: I also perceiv'd what he drove at, because he redoubl'd his Sedulities, and gave me sufficient Intimations that he was passionately in love with me. Till then I little minded his Court-

Courtſhip; but when I found him in earneſt, I carri'd my ſelf more warily, and ſo behav'd my ſelf toward him, as to let him ſee there was no hopes. And whether it were that my entire devotion to my Husband made him forbear his Courtſhip, or whether he lookt upon my Severity as an Artifice which I made uſe of to engage him the more, he ſpoke no more to me concerning his Paſſion, and we began to live together as if he had never mention'd any ſuch thing to me.

St. Albe return'd from the Army, and we went to ſpend the Winter at *Paris*. *Velley* accompani'd us, and having fetch'd his Daughter out of the Convent, preſented her to me. She was witty, and chearful in her humour, and I was glad of ſuch a pleaſant Companion in my Houſe. 'Tis true that her Beauty was ſo lively and ſo charming, that had I bin never ſo little addicted to Jealouſy, or rather could I have imagin'd that *St. Albe*, who lov'd only Me and the War, could have bin of a humour to alter his Inclination, I might have bin afraid of her Allurements. I gladly therefore accepted *Velley*'s Propoſal to let him have an Apartment in my Houſe, though my Husband told me it would be inconvenient to lodge Strangers under the ſame Roof: but I aſſur'd him they were People that would be no trouble to us in the World. He was not accuſtom'd to contradict me, and therefore would not oppoſe a thing which I ſeem'd to deſire; but added he with a ſmile, blame no body but your ſelf for what may happen, for Mademoiſelle *de Velley* is very amiable. I anſwer'd him alſo with a ſmile, that inſtead of alarumming my ſelf at that, I deſir'd he might find her to his humour, for I lov'd him too well to diſlike what he lov'd. But he found too ſoon that I did not mean as I ſaid.

About

About a Month *Velley* and his Daughter had liv'd with us, when I perceiv'd that *St. Albe* labour'd with a ſecret melancholy that tormented him, and which he ſtrove to conceal under various Infirmities of which he complain'd; he ſpent the Nights without ſleeping; he ſigh'd continually, and me thought he avoided the ſight of me; for when I came to him to ask him what he ail'd, he ſhun'd me, and ſighing only cry'd that he was very ill. This began to diſturb me, and I deſir'd him to enter into a Courſe of Phyſick, to which he anſwer'd, that nothing but death could cure him. I redoubled my cares and my Careſſes, which he coldly receiv'd, and which I attributed to his Diſtemper; I judg'd him to be very ſick indeed, ſince inſtead of being a comfort, I was become a trouble to him. I was ſo perſuaded that his indifference for me was no other then an Effect of his Diſeaſe, that I durſt not complain of it for fear of adding to the pain of his diſtemper, the trouble which I thought it would be to to him, ſhould he perceive me to be diſcontented with him. I made it my Buſineſs to divert him, and in regard that *Velley* was a Jolly-man, I deſir'd his Converſation. But I found that his Company rather augmented then leſſen'd my Husband's Diſturbances: only methought that *Mademoiſelle de Velley*'s appearance gave him ſome Relief.

This began to create diſturbances within me of another nature: I felt Suſpicions and Jealouſie brooding in my Breaſt. But then thought I to my ſelf, if he loves *Mademoiſelle de Velley*, wherefore does his Love make him ſick, ſince he ſees her every day, and ſhe, if I miſtake not, no way ſeems diſpleas'd with his Company? It muſt be doubtleſs then Remorſe of Conſcience for being thus perfidi-

ous

ous to me; and he ſeeks to puniſh himſelf for his falſeneſs in loving another.

I had ſo good an opinion of him, that I made no queſtion but that his ſickneſs, ſuppoſing he did love *Mademoiſelle de Velley*, proceeded from his being aſham'd of his having Sentiments offenſive to me; but then again I was as ſoon of another mind, and thought him like thoſe Husbands who cannot endure the ſight of their Wives when once they become unfaithful. While I was rowling theſe thoughts in my mind, *Velley* enter'd my Chamber, ſeemingly pierc'd with Grief and Vexation: in which condition, when I ask'd him what he ail'd, Madam, ſaid he, I have ſtrange News to tell ye,—you here behold a Man at his Wits end——of neceſſity I muſt leave your Houſe——I underſtand your Husband *Monſieur St. Albe*'s Diſeaſe——Here are two Letters which he has written to my Daughter, and which I intercepted——read 'em, and then tell me, whether I am not the moſt unfortunate man in the World to come to your Houſe, to be the trouble of your felicity and Repoſe. I took the Letters, trembling, I open'd 'em, and found the Hand to be *St. Albe*'s. The firſt contain'd the following Expreſſions.

The LETTER.

WHY lay ye to my Charge my Affection to my Wife? Is it becauſe you are not convinc'd after all that I have ſaid to ye, that Acknowledgment only forces me to have ſome ſort of value for her. I marry'd her only to raiſe my Fortune; but 'tis my Heart, 'tis Inclination and Choice that fix me to your ſelf; and if you continue your Rigours, you will certainly be the cauſe of my death.

'Tis

'Tis impoſſible to expreſs the ſhame and indignation that ſeiz'd me after I had read this Letter. I had not ſtrength enough to read the other, but *Velley* preſs'd me to peruſe it, and it was thus indited:

The LETTER.

CONfeſs, that the Reproaches which you caſt upon me about Madam de St. Albe, *are but a Pretence which you make uſe of to conceal from me the Averſion you have for me. For in ſhort, what would you have me do to convince ye that I hate my Wife, ſince what I do every day before your Eyes, is not ſufficient to perſwade ye of the Truth? You ſee I can hardly endure to look upon her. What!——what would you have me ſtab her! to let you ſee how odious ſhe is to me?——*

Ah, Perfidious Wretch! Cry'd I, how haſt thou been able to delude me all this while!——No——I will not not follow thy Example——but it behoves me to be reveng'd of a Traytor——My Sighs and Tears would not permit me to ſay more—and how it came to paſs, I did not die under the preſſure of my over-whelming ſorrows, I cannot ſay.

Book the Eighth.

Velley ſtrove to comfort me, and ask'd me, what Satisfaction I deſir'd his Daughter ſhould make me? 'Tis not your Daughter, ſaid I, that I complain againſt, but againſt a Man who has abus'd my moſt ſincere and conſtant Love. Speak, Madam, reply'd *Velley*, what Commands will you be pleas'd to lay upon me; I adore ye, I will ſacrifice my life to ſerve you in your revenge; for I muſt not diſſemble with you, the injury done you has renew'd in my heart all thoſe Sentiments of Kindneſs and Affection which formerly my Love diſclos'd to your Diſdain. Let your Husband alone to follow his indiſcreet Paſſion: I'le anſwer for my Daughter, that her Verture ſhall ſufficiently puniſh him for his Treachery. And as for your ſelf, Madam, forget an unworthy Husband were it only to make a happy change, and vow your Embraces to a Lover that adores ye.

I was at that inſtant ſo deeply perſwaded of *St. Albe*'s infidelity, and ſo reſolv'd to revenge my ſelf, that I hearken'd to every thing that *Velley* ſaid to me; and I thought that the more he lov'd me, the more ready I ſhould find him to aſſiſt me with his Counſel and his Services; and to tell ye the whole Truth, I muſt confeſs my Vanity was ſo humbled by *St. Albe*'s Contempt, that I would have liſten'd to any man that would have but pretended to afford me Conſolation. For the ſupplys of Pride are infinite in the heart of a Woman.

I desir'd *Velley* not to forsake me; but to assist me as a Friend. He advis'd me to take no notice to my Husband of any thing that he had said to me; and as he went out of my Chamber, he told me he was going to study some pretence or other to put his Daughter into a Convent; and indeed he carry'd her that very day to *St. Anthonies* Abbey.

After this Discourse I went to Bed, where I was seis'd with a Fever. *St. Albe* desir'd to see me; but I desir'd him to let me take my rest: however he came into the Room without my leave. He took me by the Arm, and as he was feeling my Pulse, I perceiv'd the Tears that trickl'd from his Eyes. He askt me whether I knew that *Velley* had carry'd his Daughter to a Convent? But I made him no answer: for I believ'd the tears he shed to be no other then the effect of his Grief for being separated from his Mistress. He conjur'd me to take care of my Health, but still I made him no answer; so that he was forc'd to leave me.

I spent that Night but very ill; and the next Morning they told me that my Husband desir'd to see me; but I sent him word that I had need of rest, not having slept a wink all night. With that he went away; and about Noon a Letter was brought me from him; and I was also farther given to understand that he had taken Horse, without leaving any word whither he was gone. The Contents of the Letter were these.

The LETTER.

SInce my Presence, Madam, is an Obstacle to your Health, and that I am one of those Testimonies whom you desire to be soonest rid of, I take my leave of you for ever; if you chance to hear of the death of him

who

who rob'd me of your heart, ſeek no farther for the Author of it then my ſelf. I wiſh that time would give me ſtrength to forget you, even to deſire no further revenge. It is not neceſſary the Publick ſhould be inform'd of our Differences; but you may tell thoſe who ask you what is become of me, That Buſineſs has call'd me into the Province.

This Letter I read over and over again above twenty times, yet could not apprehend the meaning of it. Could it be poſſible, thought I, to give him any occaſion to ſuſpect my Loyalty? No, 'tis a pretence which he takes to lay the blame at my door. But to what purpoſe does he abſent himſelf? 'Tis becauſe he thinks I love him too well to endure him out of my ſight; he believes me ignorant of his infidelity; he knows I am ſick; and deſiring my death, he picks a quarrel with me, that he may quite overwhelm me. For what elſe can be his aim in betraying me? Alas, continu'd I with tears in my Eyes, 'tis I who ought to complain that his heart is taken from me. Is it poſſible that *St. Albe*, that *St. Albe*, ſo different from all other men, ſhould be capable of ſo foul a Treaſon! Theſe were the Reflexions which I made; for I was ſo prepoſſeſt againſt him, that it never came into my mind that he might be innocent.

After Dinner *Velley* came to ſee me, and gave me an account how he had carry'd his Daughter to a Convent: he told me alſo that ſhe went with a hearty good will, as being tormented to the ſoul to be the occaſion of *St. Albe*'s being in love with any other but his own Wife. I told *Velley* that he had left *Paris*; at which he ſeem'd to be in a great fit of Admiration, and buzz'd it into my Head, that *St. Albe* was meditating violence to his Daugh-

ter. Then I ſhew'd him *St. Albe*'s Letter, at which he ſeem'd to be more ſurpriz'd; and after he had ſtood a while in a Brown ſtudy, he told me that my Husband had wrote to me in that manner for no other reaſon but to puzzle and amuſe me, and to oblige me perhaps to run after him, but that it behov'd me to ſtand upon my guard; for that if I did not keep ſtedfaſt, he would make an ill uſe of my weakneſs and my fondneſs for him. *Velley* would afterwards have entertain'd me with Vows and Proteſtations, and a long Preamble of his Paſſion; but I cut him off ſhort, and told him that beſides other reaſons which I had for not hearkening to him, my Husband's Letter furniſh'd me with one more: for in regard I thought he was in part ſuſpected by *St. Albe*, I was willing to ſhun him. Afterwards I deſir'd him to change his Lodging, under pretence that it did not look well for a ſtranger to lye in my Houſe, while my Husband was abſent.

I ſhew'd the Letters which *St. Albe* had written to *Mademoiſelle de Velley*, to the Counteſs of—as alſo the Letter which he had written to me upon his going out of Town. She told me, ſhe underſtood nothing of the Buſineſs; but that ſhe fear'd that both *St. Albe* and I were deceiv'd. 'Tis requiſite, added ſhe, that I ſhould ſee and diſcourſe *Mademoiſelle de Velley*, perhaps I might then pick out ſomething of the Truth. I approv'd her Contrivance, and away ſhe went to *St. Anthonies* Abbey to find the young Lady; but the Bird was flown; and the Abbeſs told her that her Father had ſent for her from thence to put her into another Houſe. The Counteſs coming back to bring me the News, found *Velley* with me, who ſwore he knew nothing of the matter, and therefore it muſt certainly be my

Husband

Husband, who had made uſe of his Name to carry away his Daughter. At the ſame time alſo away he ran, pretending to inform himſelf more fully of the Particulars; and returning in the Evening, he told me his Conjectures were too true; that his Daughter was loſt, and that he would proſecute my Husband, who was the only man that could be ſuſpected for having ſtollen his Daughter. To which purpoſe he deſir'd me to return him his Letters, which would be of great ſervice to him in point of Evidence. But I refus'd to deliver 'em; for I had ſtill ſome remainders of kindneſs for *St. Albe*, which made me earneſtly requeſt *Velley* to deſiſt from all Proceedings againſt him. I confeſs I had ſome reaſon to urge it for the ſake of my own Honour; but I was more concern'd for *St. Albe*'s Reputation.

In the mean time a Report was ſpread abroad in *Paris*, that *St. Albe* and I were parted; 'twas alſo ſaid, that I deſir'd to be rid of him, becauſe he was an Obſtacle to my familiarity with *Velley*. And all this while I kept my Bed, detain'd there rather by my own Vexations, then by any Diſtemper that troubl'd me. I alſo preſs'd *Velley* to leave my Houſe, becauſe his Lodging in it at ſuch a Conjuncture, authoriz'd the greateſt part of the Scandals that flew abroad. And well it was I was rid of him; for no ſooner was he got to his new Lodging, but he was apprehended by the King's Order, and carry'd to the *Baſtile*.

I made no queſtion but that *St. Albe* had really ſtollen Mademoiſelle *de Velley*; nevertheleſs, though I was truly incens'd againſt him for his Perfidiouſneſs, yet I could not chuſe but be afraid of the danger that threaten'd him for ſtealing the Young Lady; and I was extreamly troubl'd becauſe I knew not what was become of him; neither

would I enquire after him, becauſe I was unwilling to let him have the pleaſure to know that I troubl'd my ſelf about him. I was haughty enough to conceal the weakneſs which I found my ſelf ſtill ſenſible of for an Ingrateful Perſon, who as I thought deſerv'd my hatred.

Two or three days after *Velley* was apprehended, I receiv'd a Letter from his Daughter, who ſent me word that ſhe was in the Abby *Aux-Bois*, where ſhe deſir'd to ſee me. You may be ſure I did not at all defer that Viſit, but taking the Letters which my Husband had written to Mademoiſelle *de Velley*, away I went in haſte to the Abby *Aux Bois*.

There I found her ſo much the more afflicted for the confinement of her Father, becauſe ſhe was ignorant of the reaſon of his Commitment: And I was ſo impatient to be inform'd of what I deſir'd to know, that inſtead of chearing her up, I ask'd her briskly where my Husband was, and whether he had not fetch'd her out of St. *Anthony*'s Convent? He! Madam, anſwer'd Mademoiſelle *de Velley* in great Surprize, what buſineſs of his was that? 'twas my Father fetch'd me from thence to put me here. How! repli'd I, with ſome commotion of mind, is it not true that my Husband courts ye? No — I'le aſſure ye, repli'd ſhe, nor do I apprehend the meaning of theſe ſurprizing Queſtions. What think ye then of theſe Letters, anſwer'd I, ſhewing her the Letters which *Velley* had given me. I know not what to ſay to 'em, repli'd Mademoiſelle *de Velley*, after ſhe had read 'em, but I never receiv'd any Letters from Monſieur *de St. Albe*, nor did he ever declare to me that he had any ſuch Paſſion for me. Ah! Mademoiſelle, cri'd I with a more then ordinary agitation, if what you tell me be true, where am I, or what have I done? If my Husband be innocent,

nocent', how guilty am I! Mademoiſelle *de Velley* was extreamly aſtoniſh'd to hear me talk at that rate; Her Aſtoniſhment too appear'd to me unfeigned, which made me ask her more Queſtions, and her Anſwers confirm'd me in my thoughts that *Velley* muſt have impos'd upon me. However, the Letters ſeem'd to me to be *St. Albe*'s own Hand-writing, and I judg'd that he might have written 'em to ſome other Perſon. Upon that, I ask'd Mademoiſelle *de Velley* if ever my Husband had ſaid any thing to her concerning her Father's making love to me? She anſwer'd that *St. Albe* had never mention'd any ſuch thing to her; but that by his Sighs and his profound Sadneſs he ſeem'd to her to be aſſur'd that there was an Intreague between *Velley* and My ſelf. I blam'd her for not having given me notice of it: However, now believing I had div'd to the bottom of the Villany that had bin put upon me, I deſir'd Mademoiſelle *de Velley* to go along with me home; to which the Abbeſs was the more willing to conſent, perſuaded that I took her away, that ſhe might be the more at liberty to ſollicit her Father's Enlargement. This made all People believe that I was concern'd for *Velley*'s Confinement, and that we correſponded in private. But I valu'd not what they could ſay; my Buſineſs was only to clear up the truth of a Myſtery, wherein I began to perceive that a Surprize had bin put upon me. My Cautions vaniſh'd then, leſt *St. Albe* ſhould think I ran after him; I order'd him to be ſought for in all places where I thought he might be found. But I could hear no tydings of him, and I ſaw my ſelf become a prey to all the moſt dreadful Torments of Grief and Diſquiet. I did whatever lay in my power to diſcover the truth of this Adventure, and us'd my utmoſt endeavours to ſpeak with *Velley*, in

hopes he might be able to afford me full ſatisfaction; but no body was permitted to come to him; ſo that I fell ſick again, and Grief had infallibly kill'd me, had not an unknown Perſon put into my hands a Pacquet of Letters directed to me. I knew *St. Albe*'s Hand and Seal, which made me open 'em in great haſte, to read the following Lines.

LETTER.

I Send you, Madam, the Letters which convinc'd me of your Infidelity and my Misfortune. Judge by the reading of 'em what effect they were moſt likely to produce in a heart that ador'd you: I cannot ſurvive this Change of Yours. I have loſt the deſire of revenge, becauſe I cannot do it without publiſhing your Inconſtancy. After a languiſhing Life I am going to my Grave; and I love you ſtill ſo well as not to be aſham'd of a Death which all the World will attribute to my weakneſs; but which perhaps will not appear to you ſo full of ſhame, whenever you are pleas'd to call to remembrance how dearly I have always lov'd ye.

After I had read this Letter, I open'd with the ſame impatience the Letters enclos'd, and which contain'd the Proof of my Infidelity. And indeed the Hand and Style of theſe Letters was ſo like my own, that if I had not certainly known that I never wrote 'em, I ſhould have bin deceiv'd. The Contents were theſe.

LETTER.

WHerefore d'ye upbraid me thus with what I did for my Husband? 'Tis a piece of cruelty to reveal to my remembrance Things that overwhelm me with ſorrow. Is it not ſufficient that I here declare that I only live

at

at preſent for your ſake; ſince I have made you maſter of my Perſon and my Heart, can you envy what I did for another out of civility and neceſſity? Find out a way to deliver me from his ſight, and to remove thoſe troubleſome Teſtimonies that torment me.

I had not patience to read the reſt of the Letters which were all of the ſame nature: For now I no longer doubted but that my Hand had bin counterfeited as well as *St. Albe*'s, and that the whole was done by *Velley*. In ſhort, 'twas he who wrote 'em; for he had a ſingular Talent to counterfeit all manner of Hands; and as afterwards I underſtood, he was ſent to the *Baſtile* for having counterfeited the Hand of a Great Miniſter of State. I was then ſenſible of the Fraud that had then put upon me, and without loſing a moment's time, I enquir'd of him that brought the Pacquet, where my Husband was. I underſtood by him that he was at *St. Florentin*: Thither I flew in a Poſt-Calaſh, and in Thirty hours I arriv'd where *St. Albe* was. I found him very ſick, and almoſt paſt his Senſes, as it were gaſping between Life and Death. I threw my ſelf about his Neck, and embracing him, with Tears in my Eyes, I cri'd out aloud, My Dear *St. Albe* look upon your own Wife. He open'd his Eyes, I redoubl'd my Outcries, and Embraces, and at laſt I perceiv'd that he began to know me. 'Tis not to be expreſs'd what then I felt in my heart; and I believe that never any Perſon was ſenſible of the like; for where is that Woman that ever was under the ſame Circumſtances?

Half an hour after *St. Albe* came perfectly to himſelf, and knew me exactly: However, he had not ſtrength enough to ſpeak; only his feeble hands by graſping mine, expreſt his meaning;

and

and I saw the Tears come trickling from his Eyes; which was the cause I felt two contrary Passions at the same time strugling in my Breast, Joy and Grief. How griev'd was I to see him in that plight! how overjoy'd to find him still the same in affection and tenderness! How dearly soever I lov'd him before, I never felt till then such tender motions.

St. Albe by degrees recover'd strength, and I gave him an account of *Velley*'s Villany, shewing him the Letters which he had counterfeited. But he was no sooner convinc'd of my Innocency, but he had like to have relaps'd into the same Condition from which I had recover'd him, such were the effects of his Grief, Repentance and Joy; Oh, Madam, said he, I am unworthy of your Goodness: Is it possible I should be so base to suspect your Vertue? I ought to have distrusted my own Eyes, rather then have injur'd your Vertue, as I have done. Revenge your self, dear Madam, upon a Husband so unworthy your Embraces, and let me die to make an Atonement for such unmanly Jealousies. Live, answer'd I, my dear *St. Albe*, if you desire that I should live; 'tis I that am th' Offender; 'tis I that never understood your Real worth; and had I not bin quite forsaken by my Senses, I could ne're have thought it in your power to become unfaithful. These Renovations of Conjugal Friendship contributed more then all the Doctors Prescriptions to *St. Albe*'s Cure. So that in a little time he was in a condition to travel, and we return'd to *Paris*, to the wonder of all those who had bin Testimonies of this Adventure.

In the mean time *Velley* kill'd himself in Prison to avoid the Punishment he foresaw would be inflicted on him. A Death so terrible was a greater revenge

revenge for the Villanous Legerdemain that he had play'd us, and we began to pity his Daughter. And therefore, knowing well ſhe had no ſhare in her Father's Crime, we ſollicited for her, and prevented the Confiſcation of her Eſtate.

This Adventure which had thus embroil'd my Husband and I, did but ſerve to unite us more lovingly together: I began to reliſh the Delights of my Marriage, and never was *St. Albe* more kind and obliging then after that time. And therefore in retaliation, I thought it my duty to ſpare for nothing that might render him happy. The Employment of ——— which I purchas'd for him in the King's Houſhold made all people murmur, and ſet my Relations all in an uproar about my Ears. But *St. Albe* was eſteem'd at Court for his true Merit; and he perform'd an Action beſides, which ſtopt the Mouths of his Detractors, and made 'em judge more clearly of his Character. He had a tender love for my Son, becauſe he was my Son, and for that he had a high value for every thing that belong'd to me. He had no ſooner obtain'd the Government of ——— which the King conferr'd upon him without asking, in recompence of his good Services; but he obtain'd a Grant of his Employment for my Son, and made him a Preſent of it. On the other ſide, my Husband ſtill bare in mind a lively reſentment of *Bloſſac*'s ungenteel Practiſes to my prejudice, and had long waited an opportunity of revenge, which at laſt Fortune put into his hands.

They Both ſerv'd in *Flanders*; where *St. Albe* underſtanding that *Bloſſac* made it his Buſineſs to ſpeak diſgracefully of Me and himſelf in all Company that he frequented, his Patience could no longer contain it ſelf. He forgot the Prohibitions

againſt

againſt Duelling for my ſake, and ſent *Bloſſac* a Challenge: *Bloſſac* met him at a private Place at a diſtance from the Camp, where while they were actually engag'd one againſt the other, they were ſurrounded by a Party of the Enemy; and inſtead of duelling each other, were forc'd to defend themſelves. *Bloſſac* was preſently wounded, and conſtrain'd to ſurrender to three Troopers, who diſputing whoſe Priſoner he ſhould be, were about to have knock'd out *Bloſſac*'s Brains, when *St. Albe*, who had diſingag'd himſelf from thoſe that ſurrounded him, perceiving *Bloſſac*'s danger, forgot his private Enmity, and flying to his Succour, fell upon the three Troopers that had taken him, kill'd one, and putting the other two to flight, ſav'd *Bloſſac*'s Life, and reſcu'd him from the Danger he was in. 'Tis true that *St. Albe* was aſſiſted by ſome Officers of our Troops, who obſerving ſome Paſſages between him and *Bloſſac*, and ſeeing 'em Both walk off together privately from the Camp, follow'd 'em at a diſtance, and came in time enough to beat off the Enemy's Party; which had they not done, as well *St. Albe* as *Bloſſac* might have both undergone the ſame Fate, and both periſh'd together.

Bloſſac could not be ſo ill-condition'd as not to be mov'd with what *St. Albe* had done for him; ſo that he acknowledg'd in all Companies that he was beholding to *St. Albe* for his Life, and offer'd to make me all the publick Satisfaction I deſir'd. He confeſs'd that all his Evil Practiſes were only the effect of his Deſpite to ſee himſelf rejected by me; yet after all, he could not forbear his having a very great affection for me: He deſir'd *St. Albe* alſo to beg my pardon in his behalf. *St. Albe*, contented with this Satisfaction, demanded no more; and having

having inform'd me of this Adventure, we both concluded that *Bloſſac* had bin ſufficiently puniſh'd for his ungenteel demeanour, by the ſhame and mortification of being beholding for his Life to a Perſon againſt whom he had always had an uncivil Enmity. From that time forward he always ſhun'd me: Nor did I know, nor did I care whether he continu'd his love to me or no; but this I am ſure of, that the Hatred of Men of his Character is leſs pernicious to Women, then their Love; and that the greateſt Misfortune that can befal us, is to be belov'd by men, who not being able to win the Affection of thoſe they court, prove ſo baſe as to ſeek their Revenge by throwing Scandals and Calumnies upon thoſe that ſlight their Addreſſes. There are another ſort of men no leſs to be fear'd by Women; and thoſe are they who would prefer themſelves to a Reputation by a familiarity with thoſe they court, when there is no ſuch thing; and as if I had bin deſtin'd to ſuffer whatever could attack a Woman's Honour, I was ſtill expos'd to that Misfortune.

Now though it were not to be queſtion'd but that I had a ſingular Affection for *St. Albe*, yet there were People who perſuaded themſelves, it was impoſſible that a Woman upon whom Scandal had faſten'd ſo many Adventures, ſhould be conſtant to a Husband. The Chevalier *de Clauſonne* prepoſſeſs'd with this Error, undertook to court me; He was a Young man very handſome indeed, and who had no other defect, but the vanity to be thought a Fortunate Man in the World. He took an acquaintance with my Husband, and became one of his intimate Friends. *St. Albe* was naturally very grateful for Civilities done him, and moreover he lov'd Mirth and Good Company, and becauſe he

he look'd upon *Clauſonne* to have a Sportive Wit, he introduc'd him into my Company. And now you ſhall hear what method *Clauſonne* took to bring about his Deſign. He came every day to my Houſe, but he let fall nothing in his Converſation that might give me the leaſt occaſion to diſtruſt him; ſo that believing he had no farther Ends, I was pleas'd with his Company. He was ſtill ready to do whatever I deſir'd him; which made me ſometimes write to him, and frequently ſend to his Lodging. On the other ſide, he was no leſs careful to make known the confidence I had in him: However, he was not very apt to ſhew the Billets he receiv'd from me; but though he did not ſhew 'em, he omitted nothing that might make People believe that the only reaſon why I wrote to him ſo often was, becauſe I lov'd him. All this he reckon'd as an honour to him; and by the manner of his letting it be imagin'd that we underſtood one another, he gain'd the Credit to be look'd upon as admitted upon the Score he aim'd at, by all thoſe who knew not upon what accompt I ſuffer'd his Company. 'Tis one of the greateſt Faults a Woman can commit, to be guilty of theſe ſorts of Familiarities with Young men; and I would never adviſe any of our Sex to follow my Example. 'Tis true, that I was far from thinking it could be believ'd that a Woman of my Years and Experience ſhould begin to dote upon a Young man. Nevertheleſs the World imagin'd it, and began to talk aloud, that my Husband was the Cully to his Friendſhip with *Clauſonne*. And the Chevalier himſelf confirm'd this Report by his Aſſiduities, and the Impoſtures which his Vanity invented. But at length I came to underſtand what People talk'd of *Clauſonne* and my ſelf, und told my Huſband

Husband of it, who did but laugh it, and advis'd me to contemn reports, and to admit *Clauſonne* into my Company as I was wont to do. He laid before me, that if I forbid him my Houſe, it would but give a credit to thoſe Fooleries that were ſpread abroad, whereas the ſtill permitting him to keep me Company would extinguiſh all thoſe flying Rumours. I follow'd my Husband's advice, and ſince he did me that juſtice which I deſerv'd, I did not think it became me to vex my ſelf with with what others thought of me. For theſe reaſons I ſtill admitted *Clauſonne* to come to my Houſe, with the ſame frankneſs as before. But I never troubled him with any more Errands, nor with any more of my Billets: I alſo took the ſame care to avoid being with him alone, and never ſpoke to him but in Company. He was apprehenſive of this Alteration, and ſuſpecting the cauſe of it, he went and told the Confidents of his Vanity, that I had oblig'd him to behave himſelf with more caution, becauſe I perceiv'd that my Husband began to be jealous of him. They gave credit to *Clauſonne*'s ſtory; and there needed no more for them to give out that *St. Albe* was jealous. and they reported alſo that there had been ſome fallings out between him and I upon the account of my pretended Gallantry.

Clauſonne came not now to my Houſe as he was wont, but he affected to follow me where ever I went, and he carry'd this Affectation ſo far, that I took notice of it, and order'd him to be told that I took his way of proceeding very ill; and that if he did not mend his Manners he might chance to repent it. He was afraid of my Threats, and after that, careſully avoided my Company; and at length he gave out that I was fickle in my humour, and had ſacrific'd him to my Husband's Jealouſie.

Tho

Tho this Affair ſeem'd to be but a Trifle, yet it was a very great damage to my Reputation: for it is not enough for a Womans Honour that her Husband is ſatisfy'd with her Conduct: We are in an Age ſo prepoſſeſs'd againſt the Wiſdom and Vertue of Women, that if a Woman lives lovingly with her Husband, people believe he is either blind, or elſe that he does but diſſemble. *Clauſonne* indeed ought to have bin puniſh'd for his idle preſumption; but the remedy had bin worſe then the Diſeaſe; which ſhews how unhappy the Condition of Women is, ſeeing it is the ſame thing whether they revenge or not revenge their injur'd Reputation.

But my Husband's good Opinion made me amends for the injuſtice of the World; and it was apparent after ſo many adventures that our Union could never be diſturb'd but by death. But ſo it fell out, that *St. Albe* dy'd in the flower of his Age, and in the midſt of all his Hopes: and after that, my time was wholly taken up in grieving for the loſs of ſo dear a Husband, and ſo worthy of my ſorrow. Pardon me therefore if I recite the Particulars of ſo ſad a Separation.

At the Battel of —— and the taking of —— which follow'd that Battel, *St. Albe* had given all the Proofs of Prudence and Valour that could be expected from an Officer of his Reputation; and it is ſaid he could not have fail'd of as high a Recompence as could have bin confer'd upon a Soldier. But three or four days after the taking of —— advancing a little too far to obſerve the March of the Enemy who was going to fall upon one of our Gariſons, he receiv'd a Muſquet-ſhot through his Body, which was not thought ſo dangerous at firſt.

So

So ſoon as he was wounded, he wrote me word that his Wound was but very ſlight, and deſir'd me not to afflict my ſelf. But I could not obey him in that; I was extreamly troubl'd for him, and haſten'd to the Town whither they had remov'd him. For two or three days he was in ſuch a condition as made us hope he would live. But all of a ſudden his Fever redoubl'd, and it was thought he had an Apoſteme in his Breaſt: however it were, he was the firſt that knew all Remedies were uſeleſs, and that he ſhould die. Perceiving himſelf therefore in that condition, he ſent for me to his Bed ſide, and ordering all the People to be put out of the Room, he utter'd theſe laſt words of a Dying man.

Flatter not your ſelf, Dear Wife, with hopes of my Cure; I am too ſenſible that you and I muſt part. Then taking me by the hand, My buſineſs is done, ſaid he, and I muſt leave a Life wherein I had no other delight but that it gave me an Opportunity to ſerve and pleaſe you. Many things might eſcape me which perhaps you might not ſo well approve of, perhaps they might be contrary to your good liking; but attribute them rather to my defects, then to any ill intention: for I have always ſought to render my ſelf worthy the Honour you did me. I die full of acknowledgment of your Goodneſs. I liv'd happy becauſe you lov'd me: and I owe that little Reputation I have acquir'd, to the Deſign I had of rendring my ſelf worthy of your Love. I have endeavour'd to live like an honeſt Man, and to do my duty, becauſe I had the Honour to be your Husband. I have made no Will, becauſe I have nothing but what is your own, and what you may diſpoſe of. Aſſure your Son I die his Servant; and be kind to my Servants. So farewell, farewell for ever. Withſtand your Grief, and promiſe me you

will not ſuffer your ſelf to be overwhelm'd with ſorrow. And as you are the only perſon that makes Life deſirable to me; be ſo kind to my weakneſs, for I muſt confeſs that ſeeing you, I have not that Tranquility I ought to have to think of the Grand Affair; be ſo kind, I ſay, as to withdraw your preſence from my ſight.

While he thus breath'd forth theſe dying words into my Boſom, my Condition was to be pity'd. I bath'd his hands with my Tears. My ſobs and ſighs were the Paſſing-bells that tow'l'd his departure; nor do I know which of us two were moſt concern'd in the laſt moments of our Separation. When he deſir'd me to leave the Room, my ſtrength forſook me, and I know not what became of me. He was ſenſible of my being fallen into a ſwoon, and finding his tenderneſs did but haſten him to his end, he was unwilling to ſpend in uſeleſs ſorrows the ſmall remainder of thoſe minutes that were left him to prepare for death; therefore he call'd the people, and caus'd me to be carry'd away.

They put me to Bed, where I came to my ſelf in two or three Hours: I would fain have return'd to him, but they would not let me; nor would they let me be at liberty till he had breath'd forth his laſt gaſps. Every one was taken up with his own grief. His Servants were all in tears; the Soldiers preſt in, in Crouds, to ſee him, and kiſs his hands. The Officers withdrew profoundly ſilent, and had not ſtrength enough to oppoſe my paſſage into his Chamber, where I beheld him breathleſs. Good God! what a Spectacle was it to me! 'Twas a Miracle that I ſurviv'd him; however I ſtopt the Deluge of my Tears to pay him my laſt Duties, and I ſignaliz'd my Love by the Magnificence of his Obſequies.

Here

Here I end the Story of my Life; tho in the Design which I propos'd to my self, to shew the great unjustice done our sex, I may be able to find new Proofs of that Injustice in what afterwards befel me when I had utterly renounc'd the world. For I found by experience that the most exact retirement, and the most sincere and blamless Conduct are no sufficient shelter from the Thunderbolts of Scandal. When a Woman has once bin famous for being a Lover of Gallantry, people will have it that she must still retain the same inclination in retirement; and every Friend or Director that comes to her, must be her Servant.

I hope to continue the Design I have begun in justification of Women. I have known several who have bin as little spar'd by publick Report as my self; and I shall shew by the recital of their Adventures more clearly then by my own, That outward Appearances are frequently deceitful, and that there is more misfortune then Irregularity in the Conduct of Women.

FINIS.

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